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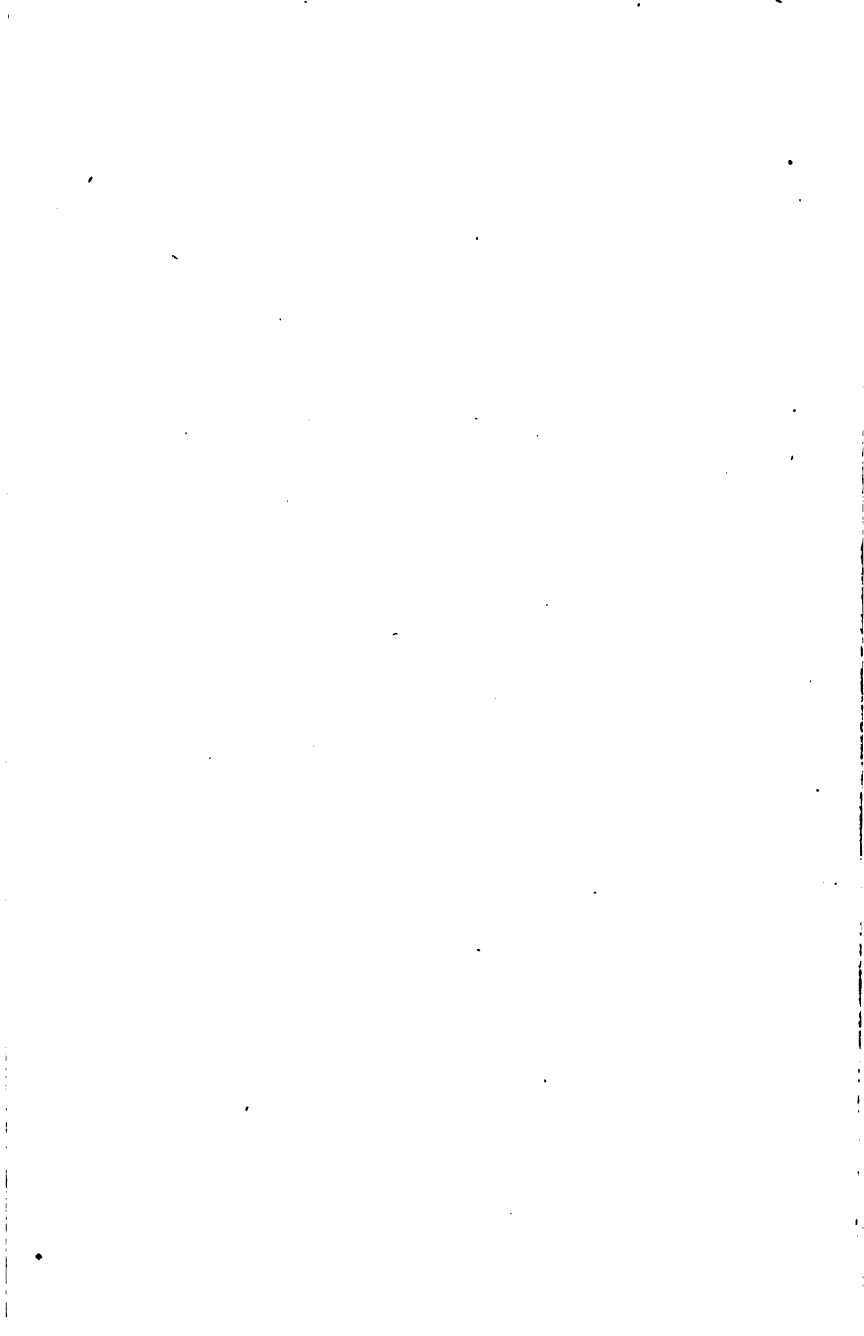
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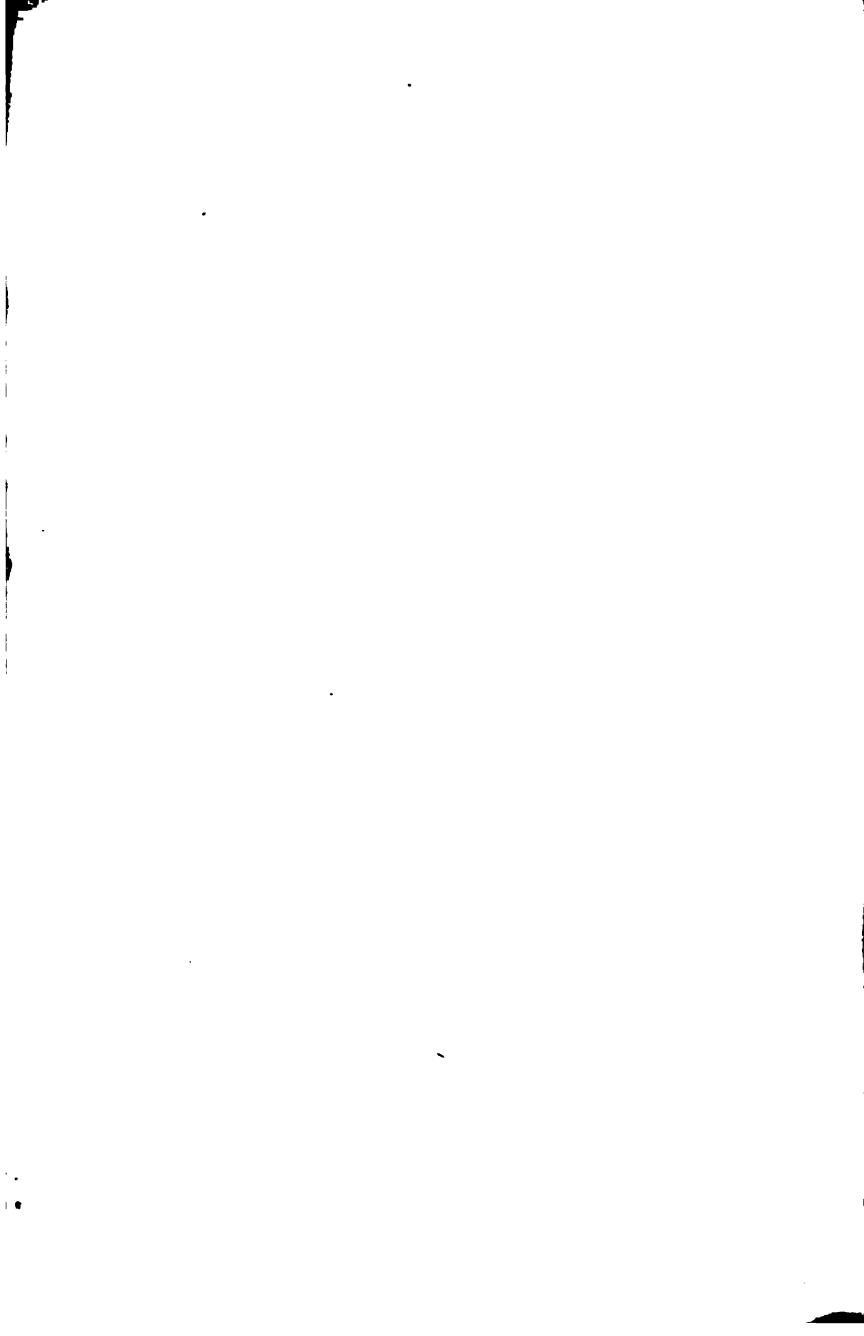
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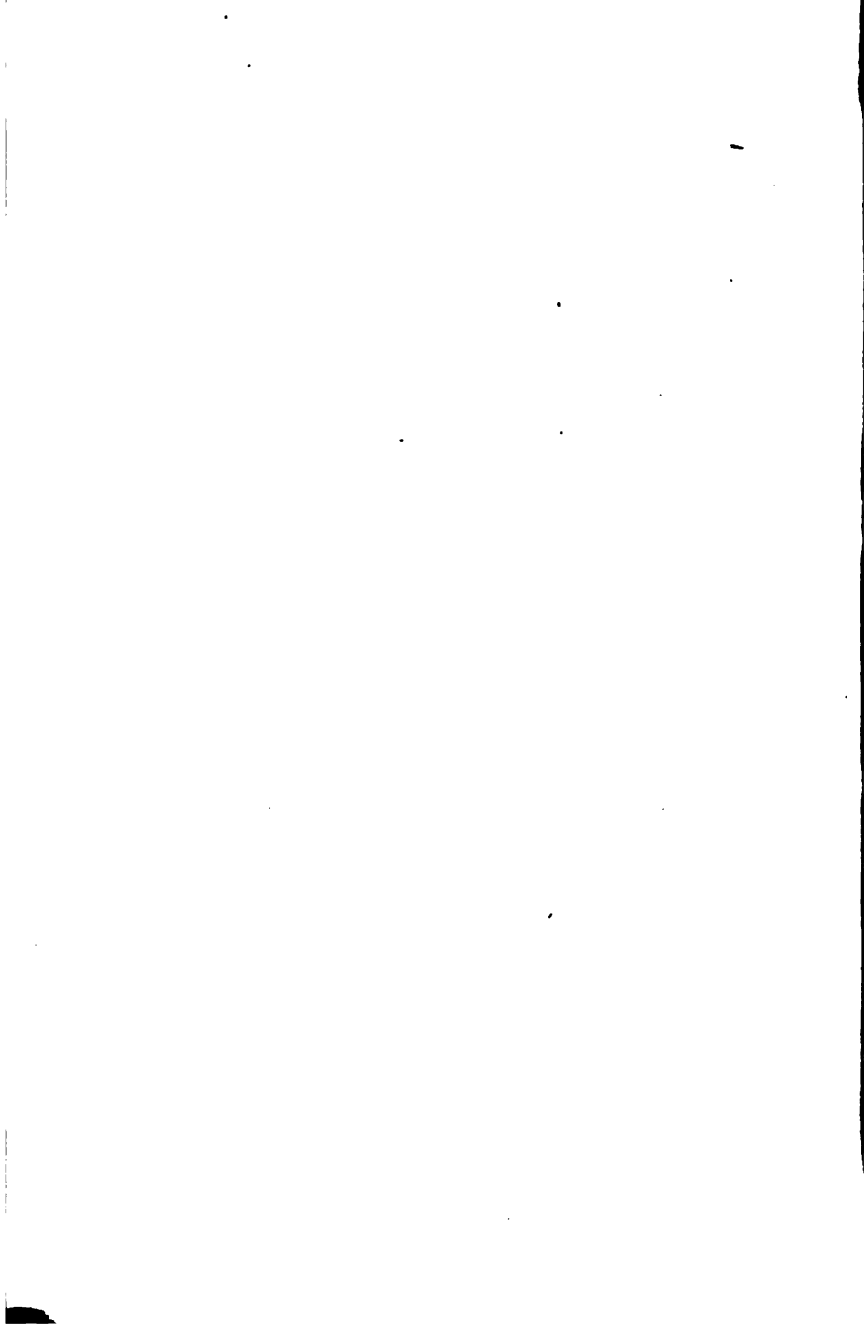
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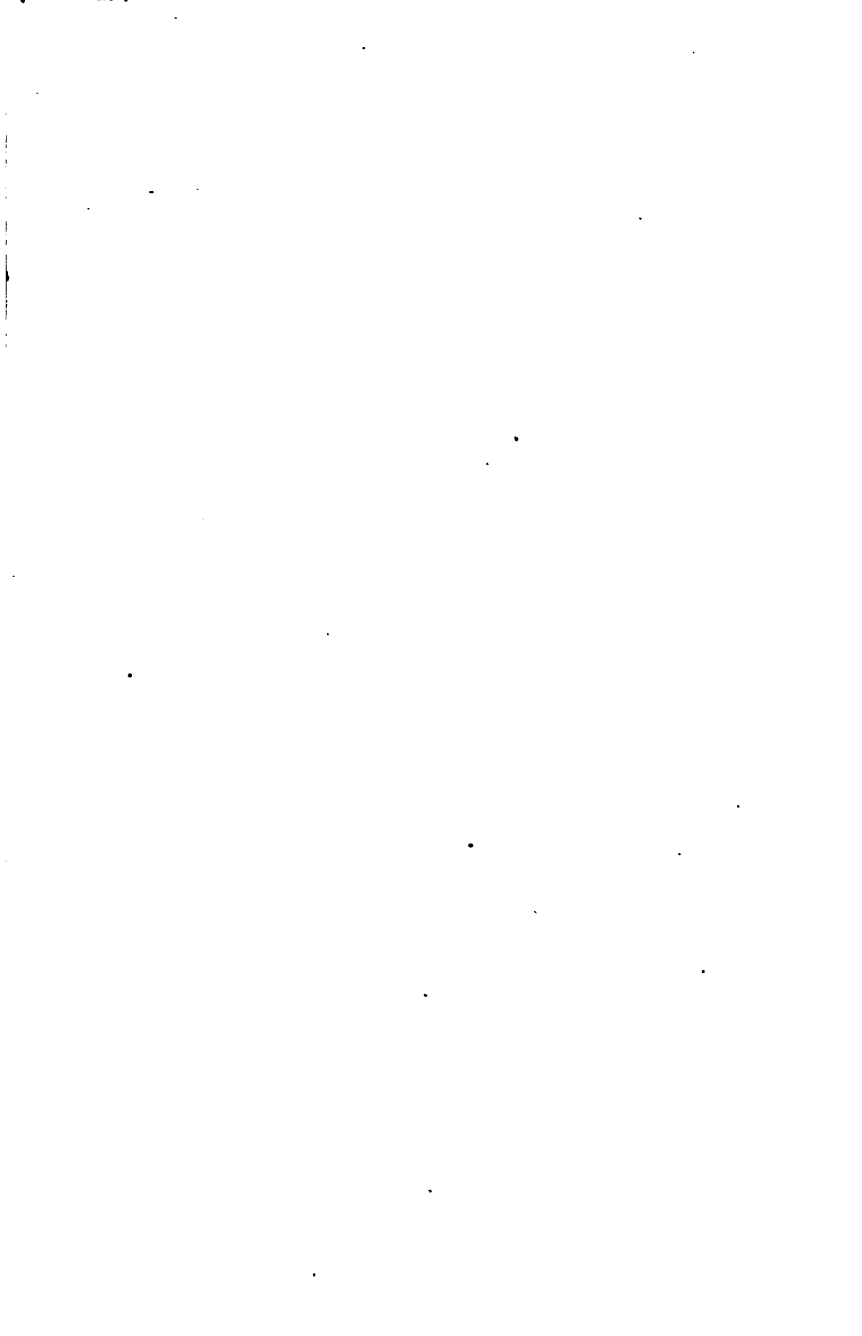


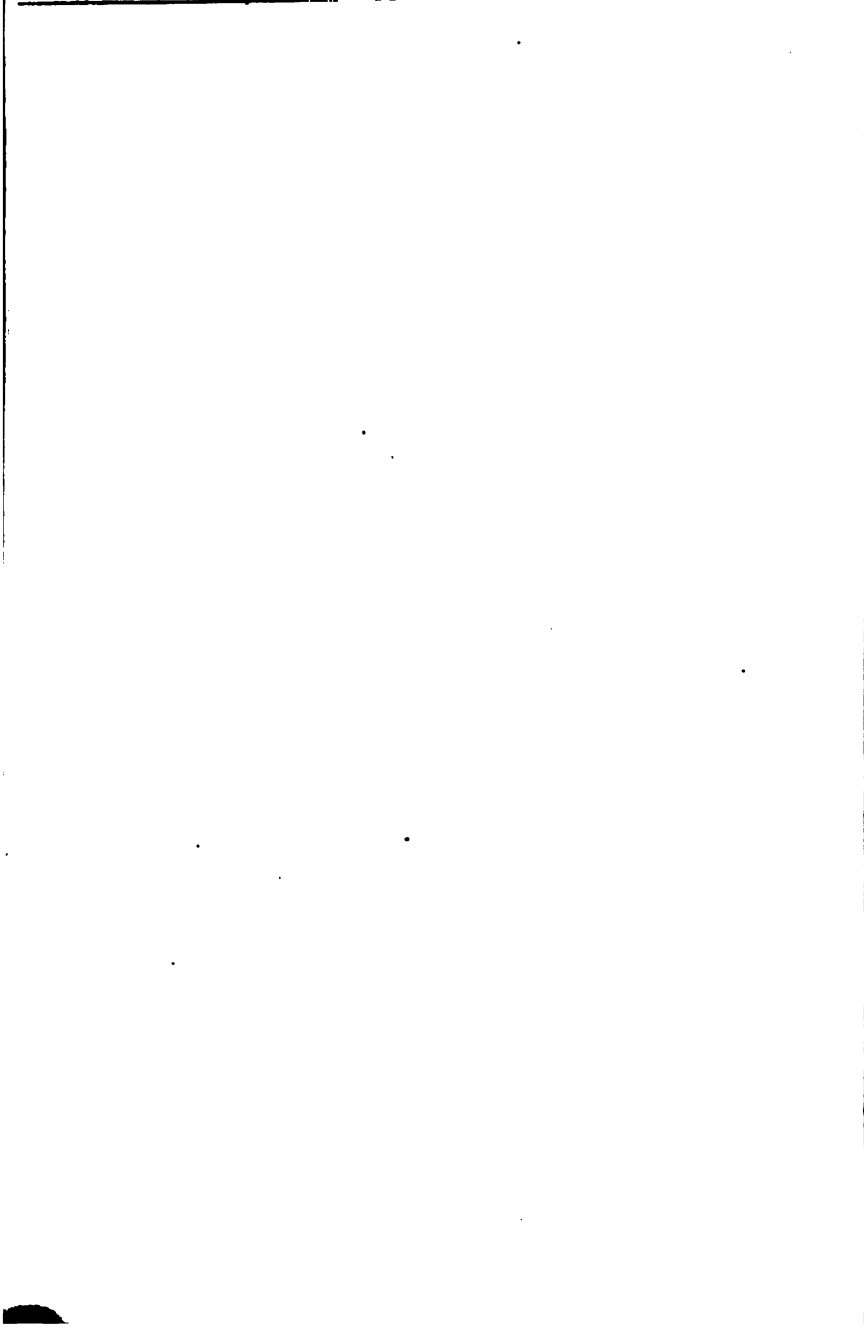
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"SHUTTING BOTH EYES, I FIRED."





THE STORY  
OF A YANKEE BOY

*HIS ADVENTURES ASHORE  
AND AFLOAT*

BY  
HERBERT ELLIOTT HAMBLEN

AUTHOR OF

*"On Many Seas," "The General Manager's Story," "Tom Benton's Luck"*

ILLUSTRATED BY  
HARRY EDWARDS

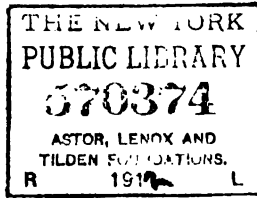
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# THE STORY OF A YANKEE BOY

HIS ADVENTURES ASHORE AND AFLOAT

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## CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE — A SPLENDID FISH — MY PARTICULAR CHUM — MISS ARABELLA JONES — HER DISLIKE OF US — OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER.

“COME, Willie, it’s time you was gettin’ ready for Sunday-school.”

I did n’t care particularly for Sunday-school, but I loved the gentle old lady who was the only mother I had ever known; so I obeyed her at once, and we were soon jogging along behind Deacon Wakeman’s fat old gray mare toward the Methodist meeting-house three miles away. It was a lovely June morning; one of those bright pleasant days when simple existence is a pleasure. As we drove through the brook to let old Kate drink of the cool water that came rushing down from the blue

mountains away to our left, I glanced longingly down stream through the alders and willows, and sinfully wished that I was going fishing, instead of to Sunday-school and church.

I knew every trout hole for miles ; and though but twelve years old I was an ardent and expert angler.

Many a string of fish had I brought home from that same brook and from the pond into which it ran. Only two days before, I had caught the biggest pickerel I had ever seen. He weighed a trifle over five pounds, and I had about all I could do to land him, strong as I was. I caught him among the lily pads in a little cove where I had fished many a time before. I shall never forget the sensation, when he rushed at the hook, tearing the quiet surface of the pond into foam, swallowed the bait, hook and all, and sped away like a comet. I yanked feverishly at the pole. The good hornbeam bent like a willow wand ; but it was a well-seasoned stick, and I had the satisfaction of seeing him rise from his native element, his magnificent length sparkling in the bright sunshine like gleaming silver. With a giant swing, I flung him far back at a safe distance from the water, struggling and gasping on the grass.



### *His Adventures Ashore and Afloat* 3

I dropped the pole and ran eagerly to where he lay. What a beauty he was ! His back and sides of deep green formed a fine contrast to the glistening white belly that he turned to my admiring gaze, as he thrashed his grand length about in his death struggle.

I was the hero of the village that day, yes, and for several days after ; for I managed to introduce the subject of fishing into every conversation in which I took part ; until people, who had probably never caught such a fish in their lives, told me that I made them tired and began to avoid my company. What an excitement my appearance caused as I trudged proudly down the one street which comprised the place ! I carried my prize on a stick over my shoulder, his tail flapping against my bare legs at every step. The boys flocked around me in crowds, asking questions and pouring out congratulations. When I arrived in front of the tavern, the climax of my glory was capped by old Seth Bigelow. He was the acknowledged authority in the village on all matters pertaining to hunting and fishing.

Noting the unusual excitement from his place in the sunny corner of the tavern piazza, he slowly arose and shambled out to meet us.

4      *The Story of a Yankee Boy*

"Land's sake, boy, where 'd ye git that pickerel?" he asked.

"I ketched him in Gilman's pond," said I, "just in behind Hemlock P'int."

"Is ther' any more on 'em?"

"I dunno, I did n't see any more."

"Wal, I guess ther' hain't. Sech pickerel's that are mighty scarce round here nowadays. I hain't seen one like it sence Jabe Nelson built the sawmill over to Wellesley. The ponds an' rivers has been full of logs an' loggers ever sence, an' the fish are all scairt out o' the country."

He handled my fish admiringly, and patted me on the back, telling me what a smart boy I was, and predicting that I would grow up to be President yet. I was so proud that I hated to go home. When I did finally get there I had been so long in the sun that my pickerel was dried and wrinkled, and I was escorted by a swarm of flies that nearly hid us both.

The son of our nearest neighbor, Frank Gibbs, was my particular chum. He was about my own age, full of life and fun, and apt to be at times a little thoughtless of the rights of others, as most boys are. We were nearly inseparable; and some of our boyish pranks—mere fun to us—were very annoying to our elders. Miss

Arabella Jones, a maiden lady of uncertain age and temper, had taken a particular dislike to us, and never failed to charge us with all the mischief that came to her notice. Consequently there was always an unbalanced account between her and us. On the Sunday in question, Frank and I took our lunches to the horse shed in the rear of the church, and, climbing into the Deacon's wagon, ate it.

"It's an awful hot day," remarked Frank, as he struck wildly at a big bluebottle that kept buzzing round his nose.

"Ain't it? Bully day to go in swimmin', if 't warn't Sunday," I replied.

"Fine! What do you say—shall we go? After we get home an' the old folks get to talkin' politics 'n' religion, we can sneak off an' have a gay ol' time. Oh—here I go off round Sandy P'int."

He began to strike out and blow and splutter, as though he was swimming in reality. I had been fishing with the whip and left it leaning against the dashboard. Frank became so interested in his efforts to get round "Sandy P'int" that he knocked the whip out of the wagon. It fell across the flank of Miss Jones's three-year-old colt and set him to prancing. We shouted "Whoa!" but he acted worse in-

stead of better, and began to kick. I jumped down, and, taking him by the bit, tried to quiet him. He continued his antics in spite of me, making a terrible racket.

One result of his kicking the wagon was that several fine Baldwin apples, a bag of seedcakes, and a small brown bottle rolled out from under the seat. Frank jumped up into the tail of the wagon to get a couple of apples, for they were very scarce at that time of year. As the colt, in spite of my efforts, kept up his tantrums, the bottle was thrown against one of the iron braces of the wagon and broken. Just then sister Jones, accompanied by the Dominie, Deacon Wakeman, and half a dozen others, came rushing round the corner of the church to learn the cause of the disturbance.

Frank must have heard them coming, for he got away without being seen ; while I, being busy trying to quiet the colt, knew nothing of their approach until a bony hand was inserted in my collar. The knuckles bore sharply against my spine, and I was slatted around in a manner that not only broke my hold on the bridle, but mixed my ideas hopelessly. When I was able to steady myself a bit, I found myself confronting Miss Arabella, who glared savagely at me through her spectacles. Giv-

## *His Adventures Ashore and Afloat* 7

ing me an extra shake for good measure, she finally shrieked at me in her shrill voice : “ Oho ! so it ’s you again, is it ? I ain’t surprised ; not a mite. If there ’s any mischief afoot, you an’ that Gibbs boy air bound to be in it. I ’ll bet he ain’t fur off now. What was ye doin’ to my colt, hey ? ”

Without waiting for an answer she turned to the Deacon, and continued : “ I ’m astonished, Silas Wakeman, that you allow this boy to carry on the way he does. He ’s got the life near pestered out o’ me. He stones my hens—”

“ I don’t neither,” I interrupted.

She gave me a jerk that nearly threw me off my feet, as she asked : “ Who was it stoned my speckled hen last Wednesday if ’t warn’t you ? That ’s what I want to know ? Oh, you imp you ! ” giving me another shake.

I appealed to the Deacon to prove that I had been hoeing corn with him all that day ; consequently, it must have been somebody else.

“ Oh, yes, I s’pose so,” said she. “ An’ mebbe you did n’t throw a live toad in my well, that I had to pay Mose Griffin a York shillin’ to git out agin ? ”

“ No, ma’am,” said I, “ I never did anything of the kind.”

But she insisted that I did, and as she mentioned no date, I was unable to prove an alibi. She told the Deacon and the assembled neighbors a long string of misdeeds of which she alleged that I was guilty, but of which I had never heard until that moment. In the meantime, Frank, seeing the attention all centred on me, ventured to return. When he heard her assert, among other things, that I had broken a big limb from her best cherry-tree, his indignation got the better of his discretion, and he chipped in with, "Oh, what a whopper!"

"I vum, if there ain't the other one," said she; and dropping me she started for Frank. He was too quick, however, and eluded her. I, of course, improved my chance, and after dodging through the crowd and getting behind the shed, we made off to a maple grove a little way down the road to talk over our grievance in peace.

Frank insisted that we ought to "get square" for the libel she had put upon us; but I reminded him of the Dominie's talk that morning, wherein he had explained the beauties of heaping coals of fire on your enemy's head. I said I could not imagine a better chance to test the theory than in Miss Jones's case. She had gone out of her way to vilify us, and was

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known to be of a shrewish disposition ; always quarrelling with her neighbors and with never a good word for any one. If we could conquer her by kindness it would be a great thing.

“ Ah, go 'long ! ” said Frank.

## CHAPTER II

FRANK AND I GO IN SWIMMING — CAUGHT IN THE  
ACT — A TRYING ORDEAL — I COME OUT OF IT  
WITH FLYING COLORS — A SKUNK IN MY TRAP.

DURING the ride home the Deacon questioned me closely in regard to the complaints of Miss Jones. I convinced him that they were unfounded and malicious ; but he told me they were by no means the only unfavorable reports he had heard of me. Mrs. Wakeman, for whose good opinion I had a sincere respect, talked to me in her kind, affectionate way, telling me I should always show respect to my elders, even though I did not like them.

I resolved to see Frank again about the coals of fire business.

After dinner Mrs. Wakeman told me to take off my best clothes. The weather being warm, she allowed me to put on the old hickory shirt and trousers that I wore on week days. I strolled impatiently about, until I saw the Deacon gradually lower the heavy Bible to his



lap, while his head fell over the back of his chair, and from his wide-open mouth came a series of snores that assured me he was harmless. Going to the rear of the house, I saw that Mrs. Wakeman was busy "putterin' round" in the kitchen. I was soon over the fence, through the orchard to the road, and then away like the wind in the direction of Frank's.

Before I reached the house I saw him sitting on a stump by the roadside, whittling for dear life and kicking his bare heels.

"Hello, Frank!"

"Hello, Will! Goin' in swimmin'?"

"N-n-n-o."

"Why?"

"'Cause. Say, Frank, I come over to talk to you about Miss Jones."

"Why? What's she been up to now?"

"Nothin'. I was goin' to ask you what you think about heapin' coals of fire on her head?"

He stopped whittling, looked at me a moment, and saying, "Come on," closed his jack-knife and started down the road. I followed, and he began telling me that his uncle, who had recently returned from California, was building a most wonderful kite. It was to be bigger than any ever seen in our section of

country, and modelled after those made by the Chinamen in the west. He explained at length the wonderful qualities of the great kite until I wondered how such things could be, and wished that I too had an uncle from California. But Frank said I should be present and have a hand in the raising of it, so I felt somewhat consoled. When we arrived in sight of the pond, he yelled, "First in," and, pulling off his shirt as he ran, started for our favorite place—a point of rocks from the outer one of which we could dive into a ten-foot hole. I was after him hot-foot. He had his hat and shirt in his hand. It was a difficult road out to the big round rock at the end; the stones were sharp and slippery, but I was bound not to be beaten if I could help it. Once a treacherous stone rolled under my foot. I fell and barked my shin, but I was up again and limping along for dear life. My eyes were so full of tears that I could only see a big blur where I knew the pond was, but I shut my teeth hard and kept at it. Frank had unbuttoned his trousers as he ran. Presently he lost his grip on them and they came down by the run. While he was pulling them off, I put on a spurt, passed him, and dived off the rock without even taking off my hat.

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When I came spluttering to the surface he was still standing on the rock.

"Oh, say, Will, that was n't fair," he cried. "I stopped to take off my breeches or I'd a been in ahead."

I laughed, climbed out, undressed, and after spreading my wet clothes on the rock to dry, dived in ahead of him again. What a glorious time we had. The water was just cold enough to make you dread the first plunge, but splendid when you were once in.

We dived, swam, and splashed about, until the position of the sun warned us that it was time to start for home and the chores.

"Here goes for one more dive, Frank," I shouted; and, like a pair of frogs, we dived together off the rock. As we rose to the surface I heard a familiar voice call out from the shore: "William!"

"O Lordy," said I, "there's pa!"

"Don't answer," said Frank. "He did n't see ye. Keep close in to the rock an' he'll go away in a minute."

I was n't sure that he had not seen me; but, without stopping to think, I acted on Frank's advice. We swam close to the rock and "trod water," until the voice called again in solemn tones:

"William Kimball, I saw you dive offen that rock, an' I want you to come here to me this minute. I shall stay here till you do."

"It's no use, Frank, I got to go. He seen me, but maybe he did n't see you ; so you stay in till we get out o' sight."

"All right," replied Frank. "I hope he won't lick ye ; do you think he will ?"

"I dunno," said I, "I hope not." But it was with a quaking heart that I climbed out of the water and put on my two garments, all stiff and wrinkled from the exposure to the hot sun.

The Deacon had whipped me a few times, so I knew what I had to fear. The one thing that he would not overlook was wilful disobedience ; of that I was now guilty. He had forbidden me going in swimming, "time an' agin." Besides, I had broken the Sabbath, which I knew was a capital offence in his eyes. As I slowly picked my way along the point of rocks over which I had raced so hilariously but a short time before, I observed from the corner of my eye that the Deacon carried a stout birch switch, a thing I had never known him do before. I began blubbering at once.

"Why did n't you answer me the first time I called ?" he asked severely.

I hung my head and made no answer.

"Do you hear me?"

There was an ominous swish, and I received a stinging cut on my thinly-clad legs that made me jump with surprise and yell with pain. As I saw his arm rise to repeat the blow, I started at a two-forty gait for home, catching a glimpse of Frank's scared face as it peered around the rock. The Deacon was too dignified to run after me, or to shout; so I knew that for the present I was safe; but oh, what would happen when he got home! There was only one thing I could think of that might save me. If I could get Mrs. Wakeman to intercede in my behalf I might escape; but I knew the Deacon had a way of backing his own judgment that was discouraging. Nothing better presenting itself to my mind, however, I determined to try it. Bursting into the house as though a hive of bees were after me, I rushed to where she sat, and, burying my face in her lap, I cried, between blubberings:

"Pa is a-goin' to lick me! Don't let him. Oh, ma, please don't let him."

She stroked my hair with her soft hand, and said:

"Why, my poor dear, what's the trouble? What have you been a-doin' on? Pa won't

whip you unless you 've been doin' somethin' to deserve it."

"Oh, I have; I've been in swimmin'."

Any further efforts at securing a champion were frustrated by the stern voice of the Deacon at the door; he had made remarkably good time from the pond.

"William, come here to me!"

I arose in terror and obeyed. He took me by the hand and started for the barn. "Pa!" said the old lady in a voice of entreaty. He looked round; I didn't dare to. No more was said, but I could imagine how, her kindly eyes overflowing, she had shaken her head deprecatingly. We entered the barn. My tears and lamentations burst forth afresh. How gloomy it looked in the dim light of the late afternoon. I glanced apprehensively at the buggy whip. The Deacon turned over a half-bushel measure and seated himself on it. I stood facing him; our eyes about on a level.

"Now, sir, I want to know what you mean by such actions?" he asked sternly.

I was crying furiously. As soon as I could control my voice, I replied spasmodically through my sobs, "I dunno."

"You don't know? Don't you know that you 've disobeyed me? Haven't I told you,

time an' time agin, not to go in swimmin' ?  
Do you want to git drowned ?"

"I can swim," I whimpered, for want of a better answer.

"Don't interrupt me, sir ! Do you remember what I promised you if I ever ketched you in swimmin' agin ?"

"Yes, sir." At the awful recollection I again made the rafters ring with my repentant howls.

"Then what made you do it ?"

"I did n't think you 'd ketch me—this time ; 'cause you was asleep when I started."

A prolonged silence ensued. I took a furtive glance, and thought—hoped—I noted a slight twinkle in his eye, and a barely perceptible twitching at the corners of the stern mouth. If such were the case, they were gone instantly. He cleared his throat and resumed :

"When I promised your poor father on his dyin' bed to take you, an' bring you up, an' eddicate you, I had no idee you'd turn out to be sich a bad boy. You've violated the commandment which says : 'Remember the Lord's day to keep it holy !' You created the wust scandal at church this noon that I ever remember ; an' I've b'en goin' to that church, man an' boy, for sixty years. I did n't exactly

believe all Miss Jones said about you, but I guess, after all, it's true. You air a bad boy! Why, when I was your age, I'd no more think of doin' a thing that my father told me not to, than I would cut my hand off."

"Did n't you never go in swimmin' when he told you not to?" I asked thoughtlessly.

Another temporary silence as though he were communing with himself. Then :

"N-n-o. That is—at least—never mind about me. Do you think you can be a good boy now, if I overlook this?"

"Yes, sir," joyously.

"Wal, all right then ; you can go down to the pasture an' drive up the cows. Never mind the oxen an' steers, only the cows to milk. You say you can swim?"

"Yes, sir."

"When did you learn?"

"Last summer."

"Last summer? Why, I did n't allow you to go in swimmin' last summer." He looked at me inquiringly a moment. I hung my head repentantly, and he added with an unconscious sigh of resignation : "Wal, as long as you kin swim, I don't know as I've any objections to your goin' in. It was only because I was afraid



you might git drowneded that I forbid you goin' in at all."

Hooray ! Here was a victory indeed. There were very few of the boys whose parents allowed them that privilege. Full of impatience to see Frank and tell of my good fortune, I raced light-heartedly after the cows.

As it was rather early, the cows had not yet come up to the bars, so I was obliged to go after them. The pasture contained thirty-five or forty acres of poor land, some of it covered with trees and bushes. I had a steel trap set on the bank of a small brook, hoping to catch a muskrat, or even a mink. Having plenty of time I thought I would take a look at it ; so I struck off through the woods in that direction. Before I had gone far, I realized that there was a polecat in the neighborhood ; and when I caught sight of my trap, there was the gentleman, good and fast in it. I thought at first that it was a woodchuck, and was just going to run in on him, when he turned and I saw my mistake.

I left him in possession and went on after the cows, wondering how I should get rid of him. We had no gun, and though I had heard of people killing a skunk with a rake's tail, I did n't hanker for the experience. The

cows having started for the bars, I did n't have much farther to go. As I trudged along behind them, a brilliant scheme occurred to me. I thought what a fine thing it would be to make Miss Jones a present of my skunk. I had no doubt that she would appreciate it much more than any attempt of mine to heap coals of fire on her head. But how to do it—that was the rub, for skunks are awkward fellows to handle. While I was cudgelling my brain with this problem, I met Frank.

## CHAPTER III

FRANK AND I PLAN A TERRIBLE VENGEANCE —  
THE SKUNK THE MEANS — MISS JONES THE  
VICTIM — “THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR  
IS HARD” — DIRE FAILURE — MISS JONES  
TRIUMPHANT — TO THE POND.

“FRANK,” said I, “I’ve got a skunk in my trap down here at the brook.”

“All right,” said Frank, “you can keep him ; I don’t want him, and I guess there won’t nobody steal him.”

“But how am I to git rid of it?”

“Give it up! You might leave him there till he starves to death.”

“Yes, I could do that, but even then I could n’t go near the carcass ; and besides, I want the trap set for muskrats.”

“Well, if you leave him long enough, there won’t be nothin’ left but bones, an’ if you leave them long enough, they ’ll all fall apart.”

“I know a better use than that to put him to, if I could only think how to do it. You

know old Miss Jones is down on the pair of us, an' if we could only manage to drop that skunk in her hen-house, it would serve her glad for tryin' to get us licked every chance she has."

"Jiminy crikey, that's so! That's a bully good scheme; but how are we goin' to manage it? You can't carry a skunk around like you can a kitten."

"I know it, hang it all! That's the trouble. Say, where can I find you after I get my chores done?"

"I'm goin' home to do mine now, an' after I get through, I'll come over to your house, an' if you get through yours first, you come over to mine."

"All right! An' hurry up, will you? An' each of us'll try an' think out a plan; you see we want to do it to-night, 'cause he may get away."

"Yes, that's so, all right! I'll hurry home an' git done as soon's I can."

While I hurried through my milking I tried to think of a way to get Miss Jones's present to her, but failed to hit on a plan. I wanted to ask the Deacon if there was any safe way to handle a skunk, but past experience had taught me caution, and I decided that this was

a first-rate time for me to say nothing to anybody on the subject. When I got done, I was in a hurry to go ; but to my dismay, Mrs. Wakeman called me in to try on a pair of trousers she was making for me. It seemed as if she would never be done letting out and taking in, or ripping and basting together again. Hearing a whippoorwill, which I knew to be Frank's signal, I was very uneasy ; and after I had said for the fifth time, " Oh, that's good enough. They fit all right. Can I go now ? " the old lady's patience gave way, and she said :

" For the land'ssake, Will, what's the matter with you to-night ? You give me the ' dumb fujits ' ; yes, go ' long if you want to ; but don't let me hear any complaints 'bout these pants not fittin'. I hain't half tried 'em on."

Before she had done talking I was out of the house, and Frank and I soon had our heads together behind the stone wall. The result of our confab was, that I returned to the house for matches, and then we went out to the barn. After falling over about everything there was there in the dark, we found the lantern and two grain bags. We took off our clothes ; cut holes in the bottoms of the bags for our heads, and in the sides for our arms.

We then put them on like sleeveless shirts ; and, leaving our hats and clothes just inside the door, where they would be handy, took our lantern and matches and started.

As soon as we got out of sight of the house we commenced to dance and laugh, in anticipation of the good joke we were going to play on the old maid, and in enjoyment of the ridiculous figures that we made in our grain-bag shirts. We soon found enough to do, however, in slapping our bare arms and legs ; for the mosquitoes were out in force. As soon as we got into the woods, so the light could not be seen from the road, we lit the lantern. Then indeed the mosquitoes found us ; they swarmed about so thickly that they dimmed the light, and ten hands apiece would not have been enough to fight them with.

I managed to drop the lantern, which promptly went out ; and in hunting for it we both fell into a blackberry bush, and scratched ourselves until the blood ran down our legs and arms ; and we felt as if we had been skinned alive. We found the lantern after awhile, and when we once more got a light we were sights to behold.

"No great loss without some small gain," said Frank. "The 'skeeters won't have to bite

us now ; they can fill up on the blood that's runnin'."

But the "skeeters" did n't take that view of it; they bit just as hard as ever; so we hurried along, getting unmercifully scratched, stubbing our sore toes, and cutting our feet; until at last we came in sight of our prey.

"I'll hold the lantern, Frank," said I, "an' you pull up the stake that holds the chain; then we'll drag him along behind us."

"No, I'll hold the lantern. It's your skunk, an' you know where the stake is," said Frank.

"All right! If you're a-scared to go near him, take the lantern; I'll mighty soon pull the stake up."

I handed him the lantern, and started round behind a tree where I knew I could reach the stake. As I moved carefully along I heard the chain rattle, and saw the skunk with his eyes fixed on the light, crawling towards Frank.

Frank saw him too, and cried: "Hey, stay right where ye be; you're plenty near enough! Oh, phew! Oh, phew!—*Will!*"

"Hello!"

"Let's git out o' here! Darn the ol' skunk!"

He dropped the lantern again, so that we were in darkness; but before the light went

out I had pulled up the stake. So I said, "All right, come along, have you got the lantern?"

"No, to blazes with your ol' lantern! I've got enough without that. Come on, let's go over to the pond an' stay under water all night."

I scratched around until I found the lantern, and then, as the moon was shining, we took the back track without lighting it. By and by Frank said he wondered what that was thrashing about in the bushes behind us. I told him it was the skunk that I was dragging along.

"Have you got him?"

"Yes."

"Wal, let 'im go! Gosh, let 'im go!"

"Don't be a fool, Frank. It's what we came after, ain't it? We knew when we started out that he would n't smell good; that's jest the reason we wanted him."

Having become accustomed to our new surroundings, we discussed our plan of campaign. It did n't seem as if Miss Jones would get her proper share of the fun if we merely left the skunk in her hen-house. We were already enjoying the sport in its keenest sense. Our whole scheme would be a failure unless we managed so that she should participate as fully as possible in the treat we had prepared for her,



but of which we were getting the cream ourselves. As we became interested in our talk, Frank's enthusiasm returned to such an extent that, forgetting his personal grievances, he helped me drag the trap.

We agreed that we would leave our friend somewhere around Miss Jones's house—under her window preferably—and then retire to the pond for a bath.

We were so sore, from the scratches we had received in the woods, that we could no longer slap the mosquitoes, but brushed them off as carefully as though they were our best friends, and we were afraid of hurting their feelings.

It was about ten o'clock when we arrived at Miss Jones's. The night being warm, the windows were all open. We lifted the skunk off the ground, so he could n't rattle the chain, and stole quietly in through the gate.

We held a whispered council close to the house. I wanted Frank to help me get the trap off the animal's leg ; but he said "no," we would put trap and all in through the kitchen window.

"That 'll never do," said I, "for the Deacon's initials are stamped on it. Besides, how would I ever get it again ?"

"Oh, well, all right, anything for a quiet

life. I don't fancy handlin' this feller much, but he's so near dead that he can't *bite*."

Frank knelt down and held the trap, while I stood on the spring and pressed it down, so he could open it enough to let the animal's imprisoned leg out. Just as he pulled it out, and we straightened up again, whom should I see, coming around the corner of the house in her night-gown, but Miss Arabella herself, carrying a hay-rake. I grabbed Frank by the shoulder, and shoved him in behind a lilac bush; fortunately, although, as he told me afterwards, I grabbed him in an awfully sore place, he had presence of mind enough to keep quiet. He had the skunk, so I gathered up the trap as quickly and carefully as I could, and crawled in after him just as she passed, muttering to herself, that she "sposed" the pesky critter had killed half her chickens.

We heard her open the hen-house door and rattle around in there with her rake, while the hens squawked sleepily. Then she came out, closed the door, and returned in our direction, talking to herself. As she neared the lilac bush I heard her say: "Seems ter me it smells stronger out here 'n it did over there. Should n't wonder if the pesky critter's round here some'r's."

When she got opposite the bush, she stopped, looked at it intently for a moment, and then gave it a savage prod with the rake's tail, that took me squarely in the stomach.

I gave an involuntary yell and doubled up like a jack-knife.

Frank dropped the nearly dead skunk, and made a desperate dive through the bush, coming out right under Miss Jones's nose. She was looking for a skunk. So when this strange figure confronted her, it startled her considerably ; but the old maid was true grit, and seeing Frank making such good time for the gate, she started after him.

The moon was well up, so that it was nearly as light as day, and from where I lay, doubled up in pain, I had a perfect view of this most exciting race between the justly enraged old lady and Frank in his gunny-bag. Three times she swiped at him savagely with the rake. The last time, just as he stretched out his hand for the gate, the rake teeth caught in the collar of his home-made shirt, and she yanked him over flat on his back. I realized that this was my chance ; but I had so aggravated the hurt in my stomach by laughing that it was with difficulty I was able to crawl from my hiding-place. She was seated on Frank's

stomach, striking and scolding him, so I hoped to be able to climb the fence behind a pear-tree, a few yards to the right, and make my escape. Unfortunately I dropped the trap just before I reached the fence. The rattling warned her, and leaving Frank she lit on me like a fury.

I was soon in the same predicament that Frank had been in ; and as she mauled my already sore body, her tongue kept pace with her claws.

“What are you doin’ here, you scamp? You ’re after no good I ’ll be bound ; comin’ round here at this time o’ night, an’ in such a rig, too. I s’pose t’ other one ’s got away, but I ’ll make sure o’ you anyway. Is there any more on ye ?”

“No, ma’am.”

“No, ma’am ! likely I ’d believe ye. A thief would n’t mind lyin’. Git up now, an’ come into the house, till I see if I know who ye be.”

She yanked me to my feet, and in spite of my efforts to get away, dragged me into the house ; where, with a piece of clothesline, she tied me to the bedpost, while she lit the lamp. Then she hunted up her specs and came over and stared at me.

“Well ! well ! well ! So it ’s you, Will Kimball, that ’s turned to housebreakin’, is it ?”

“I warn’t housebreakin’. I was only jest

carryin' home a skunk I'd caught in my trap down at the pasture."

"Yes! I want to know if you was! An' how does it come that if you was goin' home, I find ye in my door-yard half a mile beyond your own house? Hey? Answer me that, you young limb you. Who was that with ye? Thet Gibbs boy, I s'pose. He's jest about as bad as you be, though I guess you're to blame for makin' him so. I wonder what Deacon Silas Wakeman'll say now when I bring you up before Squire Barnes an' send you ter jail for the rest of your natural life for housebreakin'?"

That was a terrible threat; and, as I realized the enormity of my crime—"housebreakin'"—I blubbered aloud and begged for mercy. But Miss Jones was hard-hearted and took delight in tormenting me.

"How d' I know but what you meant to murder me? I'll jest search ye."

Fortunately there were no pockets or other place of concealment in the gunny-bag, so she was unable to find proof of intent to murder on my person. After scolding, reviling, warning, and counselling me for half an hour or more, she went upstairs to bed, leaving me tied to the bedpost below, a victim to the mosquitoes, my numerous aches and pains, and still more

numerous unpleasant thoughts. I stood there and cried, and trembled, fought mosquitoes, itched, scratched, and ached for an hour or more. Then I began to think of escape. Why should I stand there all night, to be led before the Squire in the morning and jailed for life on a false charge? Perish the thought! My hands were free, and inside of five minutes I untied the clumsy knots in the clothesline, walked out the door, picked up my trap, and started for the pond.

## CHAPTER IV

A GOOD LONG SOAK — WE DISCUSS THE SITUATION  
— AN ALL-PERVADING ODOR — MY FIRST LIE  
— “TOOK UP.”

IF I had not been so sore all over, I should have enjoyed kicking myself for having remained tied up so long.

When I came in sight of Rocky Point, I became aware that some one was already bathing there; so I proceeded cautiously until I made sure that it was Frank.

“Hey, Frank!”

“Hullo?”

“Is that you?”

“Yes. Is that you, Will?”

“Yes, that’s me, Will. You’re a nice one to run away an’ leave a feller like that.”

“Ho! Is that so? You was n’t runnin’ away an’ leavin’ me when she ketched you, was ye?”

“Well, if I was, you ran away first, anyway.”

“Ah, well! there’s no use quarrellin’ over

that now. Git yer bag off an' come in. I guess I've been in soak here for a couple of hours already. I wish we could find somebody to tell us when we are sweet again."

"You need n't worry," said I, as I dived off the rock. "You'll hear enough on that subject 'fore you're twenty-one. Do you know what Miss Jones is goin' to do to us?"

"No. What?"

"She's goin' to have Squire Barnes send us to jail for life, for housebreakin'."

"She can't do it."

"Why not?"

"'Cause, in the first place, we didn't break into her old house; an' in the next, she's got no witnesses to prove that we was anywheres near it but ourselves, an' we would n't be such fools as to tell on ourselves, would we?"

"But if she has us taken up, an' the Squire makes us take the oath, we dares n't lie; 'cause that's a crime, an' he can put us in jail for that."

"He's got to prove that we lied 'fore he can do that, an' there's nobody to prove it by but her, if we both stick together. What fools we'd be to let that ol' maid send us to jail for somethin' we didn't do, when a little lyin' 'd save us."



“Come to think, Frank, as long as we did n’t do it, what need is there of lyin’ about it?”

“That’s so! I did n’t think o’ that. Well, I’ll tell you what we’ll do : if she hauls us up before the Squire, we’ll tell the whole business. I don’t believe she can do anything to us for that. Only we’ll say we was goin’ to leave the skunk on her doorstep. What do you say to that?”

“All right! we’ll do that. That won’t be exactly lyin’, ’cause you know we had n’t just made up our minds where to put it, when she come out and caught us.”

We kept watch on the eastern sky ; for while we wished to stay in the water as long as possible, we decided to start as soon as we saw the first sign of daylight, so as to get to bed before any one should see us. Presently Frank said : “I believe it’s gettin’ daylight, Will.”

“Yes, I guess ’t is. We’d better start.”

We tied a big stone in each of our bags, and, throwing them as far out in the pond as we could, started across lots for the road. As we were now stark naked, and had some distance to go to the Deacon’s barn where our clothes were, we ran until we were obliged to stop for breath. If the mosquitoes bothered us in the evening when we had our bags on, they nearly

ate us alive now ; we broke off branches of trees, and flogged ourselves with both hands as we ran. Just before we got to the barn, I asked Frank :

“How much would you take for your share of the joke on Miss Jones ?”

“I’d sell out mighty cheap, an’ that’s a fact. I guess she had more fun out of it than we did ; an’ the worst of it is that she’s got most of her innings to git yet.”

“What do you mean ?”

“I mean when she has us took up, an’ charges us with housebreakin’.”

“Oh, I hope she won’t do that. Do you think she will ?”

“‘Course she will. She’s jest mean enough. Nothin’ ’d suit her so well. It’s mighty tough to git took up like a thief, an’ I s’pose we’ll both git an everlastin’ lickin’ over it before it’s done with ; but it can’t be helped now. Hang ol’ Arabella Jones, an’ the skunk, an’ the whole business ; I wish we had n’t done it.”

“So do I. I guess the parson was right about the coals of fire after all. We could n’t have missed it worse if we’d tried. Hang that ole skunk, I wonder where he is now ? He ain’t no worse off than we are, anyway.”

Having reached the barn we soon got into

our shirts and trousers, and with many mutual regrets for the fool job on which we had spent the night so disastrously, and renewed promises to stand together before the Squire, we parted.

I sneaked into the house by the back door, and in spite of my sore, tired, and lame body, and unquiet mind, was soon sound asleep. It did n't seem as if I had been asleep ten minutes when Ma Wakeman called me for breakfast. After the Deacon had asked a blessing, and while she was pouring the coffee, she said :

"Must ha' been a skunk round the house last night, pa, don't you smell it?"

"Why, yes," said the Deacon, "seems to me I do, an' dretful strong, too, though I hain't noticed it before."

"For the land's sake, do look at that poor child's face an' hands! Why, he's all et up by mosquitoes. I don't see how they got into his room so. Did they keep you awake, Willie?"

"No, ma'am."

I did n't wish to attract any more attention than I could help, so I tried to avoid the subject; but the kind old soul said I must suffer terribly from so many bites (which was true enough), so she insisted on bathing them with saleratus water. While doing this she made

the discovery that the peculiar odor was stronger in my immediate neighborhood than anywhere else. She said he must have passed the night directly under my window ; and when she went upstairs to make my bed she was sure of it, for the odor was stronger there than in any other part of the house.

While I was milking the Deacon was getting ready to go to mill. I heard him say, "Consarn it all ! I was sure 't I brought six o' them bags out here last night, an' now I can't find but four."

He came out where I was milking, and said :

"William, have you seen—phew ! seems to me that skunk must ha' slep' with you last night. I don't never smell it only whom I come round where you be. You ought to go an' bury yourself about a week. I'm afraid you'll spile the mornin's milk. I'm two bags short. Hev you seen anything of 'em ?"

"No, sir."

I could have bitten my tongue off the next minute. I don't know why I lied to him about those infernal bags, unless it was that fate was bound to get me into all the trouble it possibly could over the last night's work. I had always been strictly truthful, and neither the Deacon nor his wife ever doubted my word for a

moment. Now I had lied ; and lied in a case that was bound to be cleared up during the day.

I was uneasy all the morning. I kept looking down the road, wishing Frank would come over ; but there was no sign of him. When Eddy Baker come along with a new ball his aunt had given him and offered to play with me, I ungraciously declined and went in the house. I moped round the house, to the surprise of Mrs. Wakeman, who asked me several times why I did n't go out and play. I told her I did n't feel like it, which was true enough, as I felt good and sore all over.

A little after eleven o'clock a wagon turned into the yard, and, going to the window, I saw that it was Mr. Obed Kelly, the town constable. My heart gave a guilty thump, and I should probably have run away and hidden ; but Mrs. Wakeman, who had also heard the sound of wheels, came to the window to look ; and her bulky form imprisoned me between the end of the table and the sink, so that I could n't very well get away. Mr. Kelly very deliberately tied his horse to the hitching-post, blew a loud blast on his big red handkerchief, like a doctor, and solemnly approached the door.

“ For the land's sake,” said Mrs. Wakeman,

“if that ain’t Obed Kelly ! I wonder what in time brings him ’way over here. I hain’t seen him before in a dog’s age—except to meetin’.” She hastened to meet the unexpected guest at the door, while I shivered guiltily ; fearing he had come for me, yet earnestly hoping that he had not.

“Why, how *do* you do, Mr. Kelly ? I declare for’t it ’s good for sore eyes to see you over in this end o’ town. How ’s things over to the Forks ? An’ how’s Mis’ Kelly an’ all the babies ?” Have a chair, an’ let me take your hat.”

Mr. Kelly seated himself with great dignity, cast a severe glance at me from under his bushy eyebrows that nearly finished me, and after clearing his throat, said :

“We ’re all ’s well ’s could be expected, Mis’ Wakeman. Is the Deacon to home ?”

“No, he’s gone to mill ; ben gone sence a little after eight o’clock, an’ I don’t expect him back before four or five this afternoon. You ’ll stay to dinner, won’t ye, Mr. Kelly ? If you’re in a hurry I’ll set the kittle on right away.”

“No, thank ye, Mis’ Wakeman, I can’t stop ; fact is I ’m over here on official business ; or at least,” said he, wiping the perspiration from his forehead and looking at me, “in my official capacity as constable.”

“ You don’t say ? Why, who’s bin a-breakin’ the law in this deestrick ? ”

“ It’s a painful duty that devolves upon me, Mis’ Wakeman, but one that I’m bound by my oath of office as constable to perform. I hold in my hand a warrant issued by Square Barnes, jestic o’ the peace for this township, callin’ on me as constable to produce in his office, not later than two o’clock this afternoon, the body of one William Kimball aforesaid.”

The mine was sprung, the bolt had fallen. Poor Mrs. Wakeman, her face as white as a sheet, and gasping for breath, dropped into a chair, where she sat and stared blankly at the constable for several minutes, while I roared in shame and terror. When the good lady had sufficiently collected herself, she turned to me and said : “ Oh, William, what have you ben a-doin’ ? ” Before I could answer, Mr. Kelly replied for me :

“ He is charged by one Arabella Jones aforesaid, with housebreakin’, in company with one Frank Gibbs aforesaid.”

Here my grief burst forth afresh ; and dear, kind, motherly Mrs. Wakeman gathered me to her maternal bosom and mingled her tears with mine.

"Oh, you poor motherless child!" said she between her sobs. "You hain't guilty, I know you hain't. They sha'n't take you away to jail. I won't let 'em." Then turning to Mr. Obed Kelly, constable, she said, while righteous indignation flashed through her tears: "I'm ashamed of you, Obed Kelly, a man with a family of your own, to go an' take up this poor orphan child, jest as if he was a hoss-thief, when you know in your own heart an' soul he's as innocent as the babe unborn."

"Wal, you must understand, Mis' Wakeman, that I hain't got nothin' to do with that. My duty's done when I produce the body in court this afternoon."

"The body! Why, you hain't a-goin' to kill him, be ye?"

"No, marm, the livin' body."

"Oh dear! Oh dear! I wish 't the Deacon was here. None o' my folks was ever took up before, an' I don't know what in the world to do."

"There ain't nothin' you kin do, marm. I'll jest take the boy along to my house, where t'other one is, an' keep him till two o'clock; when the Square 'll hold a hearin' in his office. You can be there an' have a lawyer to defend him if you want to."



Turning to me Mrs. Wakeman asked, in a voice that was broken by her sobs, and that went to my heart, "Willie, what have you done? Oh! this is terrible! terrible!"

In an agony of shame, fear, and repentance, I answered: "N-n-n-nothin'."

She clasped me again in her arms, and while she showered kisses on my hair and hands, she exclaimed: "I know you hain't, you poor dear. Oh, it's a shame!—a shame! An' it's all the doin's of that wicked old maid; but she'll git her come-uppance yet, you see if she don't."

"It's my duty to inform you, marm," said Obed, "that any threats you make agin the plaintiff will be used agin ye at the trial."

This dire legal threat had no terrors for the good lady, who at once commenced to make preparations for getting dinner.

"You need n't git no dinner for me, Mis' Wakeman, 'cause I sha'n't have time to wait for it; it's a long drive over to my house, an' I must be goin'."

"You can go whenever you git ready, Mr. Kelly, but that child is not goin' to leave my house fastin'. There's no knowin' if he'll ever git another decent meal o' vittles in this world. I've heard dreadful stories of the way they starve prisoners in jail."

As Mr. Kelly promised that I should dine with him at his own table, and as he began to use a rather more authoritative tone in speaking to her, she finally gave up her efforts in that direction, and sent me to wash my face and hands, change my clothes, and comb my hair. Then, all being ready, she handed me a parcel containing half a dozen doughnuts, a triangle of apple pie, and a slice of cheese ; and filling my pockets with choice apples, she kissed me hysterically, commended me to the care of my Heavenly Father, and Mr. Kelly led me out to his wagon. The last that I saw of my kind benefactress, she sat with her back to the window, her face buried in her hands, as she sobbed over my misfortunes.

## CHAPTER V

A DISAGREEABLE RIDE — PRISONERS — BEFORE  
THE "SQUARE" — "HOUSEBREAKIN'" — AN  
UNEXPECTED CHAMPION — A MORE DISAGREE-  
ABLE RIDE — AN AWFUL LICKING — WE RAISE  
THE BIG KITE.

WE had not ridden far, when Mr. Kelly remarked that the country must be full of skunks, as he smelt them all the time. I said nothing ; my heart was so full of misery that I did n't dare to speak. Before we had gone much farther, he drew a rope halter from under the seat, made one end of it fast around my waist, and the other around his own ; he then ordered me to climb over the seat and ride in the back of the wagon. "There," said he, "I guess I'll be able to breathe a little easier now." As we passed through the village, people stared at us, and several boys shouted after us ; asking me what I had been taken up for. When we passed the blacksmith shop, Dick Blake, who was my friend, jeeringly advised the constable to stop and get an ox chain

to fasten me with, saying that it was not safe to go through the woods with such a desperado fastened only by a rope halter.

It was indeed a long ride to Mr. Kelly's. The road was rough, and my seat in the tail of the wagon was anything but comfortable, especially to a boy who had been scratched nearly to death the night before; so I was not sorry when we arrived. He untied the rope from his own waist, got out, and helped me out; for I was so stiff and lame that I could n't get out alone. There were half a dozen dirty, ragged, tousle-headed young Kellys on the doorstep watching me, and making remarks. But when their father approached, leading me by my rope like a dancing bear, they all scattered as though scared half to death. He led me through the kitchen, where Mrs. Kelly, a tall, frowsy, red-headed woman, was frying pork for dinner, and opening a door on the farther side shoved me into what proved to be a bedroom. As the door closed, I saw a head come out from behind the bed, and there was Frank. I never was so glad to see anybody in my life before, and he was just as glad to see me.

He said he told his father the whole story the first thing in the morning. At first his

father was going to lick him, for he said he would n't have trouble with that infernal old maid for the price of a yearling heifer. But when he saw poor Frank's back, he said he'd wait anyway till the scratches healed ; and if it turned out as Frank said, that we had n't broken into her house, he'd sue her for false imprisonment.

"What's your pa goin' to do?" asked Frank, at the conclusion of his own report. When I told him that the Deacon did n't know anything about it yet, and that I had lied about the bags, he said: "Crikey! you'll ketch it. I should n't like to be in your place when he finds it all out."

"Neither should I," said I.

Just then the door opened, and the oldest girl brought in a lot of boiled potatoes, fried pork, and brown bread. Our troubles did n't seem to have destroyed our appetites, for we pitched in and ate like hired men. Frank wondered what kind of pie we were going to get, but I told him I did n't suppose we would ever get any more pie now.

Mr. Kelly came in while we were talking, and after fastening us together with the halter, ordered us to go ahead of him to the barn. He piled up some measures like steps, so we could

climb into the back of the wagon ; then he hitched up and drove off to the Squire's. On our arrival, we found the office crowded, and a lot of people standing outside. As we drove up and the crowd saw how he had us tied together, some cried, "Shame !" while others asked if we were train robbers, or dynamiters, or what. "What, I guess," said Obed, "by the smell of 'em."

He took us into the office where the Squire was just giving his decision in a case of trespass. Frank's father was present, and so was Miss Jones. When the Squire got through with the trespass case, he called Miss Jones and asked her if she wished to press the charge. "Cert'nly," says she. Frank's father jumped up and said :

"Square Barnes, this is the dumdest outrage I ever heard on ; that old maid comes here an' swears—"

"Square, I want to know if you 're a-goin' to let that rummy Democrat stan' up an' slander me in this court in that fashion?" said Miss Jones, her eyes blazing wrathfully.

"Order ! Order in the court !" shouted the Squire, as he pounded on his table with a little wooden mallet.

When he got them both quiet he said he'd

fine the first one that refused to keep order five dollars for contempt of court, and lock them up a day and a half for every dollar until it was paid. That kept them pretty quiet. Then he called Miss Jones and said he would read the charge and she could swear to it. He read a great long document with a lot of aforesaid in it, and which said that we had entered Miss Jones's domicile "by force and arms." When through, he told Miss Jones to swear to the truth of the charge.

"Who said anything about 'force an' arms'? said she. "I'm sure I did n't."

"Did my boy break into your house? Did you find him in your house? Or was he ever in it in his life?" asked Mr. Gibbs.

"Now, Square, I did n't come here to be insulted by this man. Them's the two worst boys in town. They've got the life near pestered out o' me, an' I want 'em punished. I want 'em sent to the reform school, or the workhouse, or some place where they can't bother me."

"Miss Jones, you will please come to order! Mr. Kelly, stand those boys a little further away from my desk, please; over there by that open window will do. Now, then, Miss Jones, do you solemnly swear that these boys made

forcible entrance into your domicile, with burglarious intent ? ”

“Wal, not exactly ; they had n’t got in yet when I caught ’em, but they was jest agoin’ to—”

“How do you know what they was a-goin’ to do ? ” asked Mr. Gibbs. But the Squire called him to order, and told Miss Jones to state her case. To our surprise she told it just exactly as it happened. She said she had been abed about half an hour, when she became aware that there was a skunk somewhere about the premises, and got up to look for it, with the result that we know.

“Move the case is dismissed ! ” shouted Mr. Gibbs. “She hain’t got no case, accordin’ to her own showin’. Settin’ under a laylock bush ain’t housebreakin’ by a thunderin’ sight.”

“Will you come to order, Mr. Gibbs ? ” cried the Squire, as he pounded away on his table. “I’ll not dismiss this case until I find out what those boys were doing in the plaintiff’s yard at that time of night. There’s something suspicious about that. And although the plaintiff has not made out a case according to her charge, I am bound to see that she is protected. Mr. Gibbs, which of these is your boy ? ”



Mr. Gibbs pointed out Frank, and the Squire made him take an oath on the Bible to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Then he told him to go ahead and state what we two had been up to that night. And Frank did ; beginning at the very commencement, he told how he met me when I was driving the cows home, and everything from that time, until he left me and went home. When he told about our making shirts out of the bags, I heard some one back of me in the crowd say, "Aha-a !" I looked round, and there, staring me straight in the eye, stood Deacon Wakeman, whom I supposed to be miles away, on the road home from the mill.

When Frank finished his story, the Squire pounded on his desk, and said : "Case is dismissed !"

"Squire, I want a warrant for that woman for false imprisonment !" shouted Mr. Gibbs excitedly.

"Oh, now ! Neighbor Gibbs, I don't think I'd do that," said the Squire.

"I don't care what you think. She's had my boy took up on a false charge, an' disgraced him for life. She's a pestiferous, quarrelsome, spiteful ol' maid ; an' I'll have the law on her ; she's the meanest woman in town, an'

ought to be taken out to the horse-trough an' ducked—"

"Square Barnes ! Square Barnes !" screeched Miss Jones, "why don't you perfect me from that man's abuse ? You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Henry Gibbs, a great big six-foot man, to stan' there an' slander er poor lone woman. Boo ! hoo ! hoo ! hoo !"

Amid the excitement a strong hand clasped my arm just above the elbow, and I looked up into the stern, set face of Deacon Wakeman. Without a word he led me out to the wagon, and I climbed in.

The ride home passed in perfect silence. It was more dismal than the ride out with Mr. Kelly had been, for I knew now that I was surely elected. There had been an element of doubt as to my fate then ; now, there was none.

When we drove into the barnyard, Mrs. Wakeman rushed out of the house, crying : "Oh, you poor, dear child. I'm so glad ! I'm so glad ! I knew you had n't done it—"

"Marthy," said the Deacon, sadly, but firmly, "go right in the house. William 's been an awful bad boy, an' I 've got to punish him severely."

You may be sure that I set up a howl when I heard that ; for though I had known it well

enough all along, yet to have my fears confirmed in such a positive manner was heartrending. Poor Mrs. Wakeman ! The tears came to her eyes, and saying, " Oh, pa, don't ! " she covered her face with her apron and went slowly back to the house.

" William, come in here ! " said the Deacon, holding the barn door open. Blinded by my tears, and sobbing in shame and fear, I clambered slowly down from the wagon and followed him into the torture chamber.

He had the horsewhip in his hand, and ordered me to take off my coat. " Oh, pa, don't ! don't ! " I screamed, " I 'll never do it agin, I never will—"

" Take off your coat an' stop that noise ! " said he. I got my coat off after awhile, and seizing me by the collar, he lashed me furiously with the whip. I screamed, I yelled, begged, prayed, and squirmed, under the merciless lash. I thought I should go crazy, die. It didn't seem possible that he could keep it up any longer ; but the good Deacon was one of those strict Puritans who believed in the saying, " Spare the rod, and spoil the child." He was strong of hand and firm of purpose. He was one who would have literally obeyed the injunction, " If thine eye offend thee, pluck it

out." He flogged me until I nearly fainted. Then he stopped, and seating himself on an empty barrel, asked me if I knew what he had done it for.

"Ye—ye—ye—yes, sir," said I.

"What for?"

"Fo—fo—for lyin' abou—about the ba-a-ags."

"Yes," said he, "that was for lyin'. I never knew you to lie before, William; but now I don't know how many times you may have lied to me; an' I can never believe you agin; for a liar is never to be trusted. You have forfeited my faith in you. A liar is the meanest kind of a person. He is a coward an' a sneak, an' never can git along in the world 'cause nobody 'll believe a word he says, or trust him with anything; for 'he that will lie, will steal.'"

As the good man told me these homely truths, I wept with shame and sorrow. Shame, at the truthful picture he drew of the liar's character, which was now mine, and sorrow, to think that I had forever lost his respect and esteem. I knelt at his knee and begged him to forgive me. I told him that I had never lied to him before, and promised faithfully that I never would again, no matter

what the consequences of telling the truth might be. He knelt with me and prayed long and earnestly that I might be forgiven, and kept in the paths of truth and honesty : then he told me that he freely forgave me for lying to him, as he believed I was truly repentant. I began to feel more comfortable (mentally) than I had at any time during the day ; but he said that however glad he was to be able to forgive me himself, he must not neglect his duty to me, even though it caused him more pain to perform it than it did me to receive it.

He then reminded me that in my escapade of the night before I had done a very wicked thing in molesting a peaceable person. Also, I had brought a lasting disgrace upon him, in getting myself "took up." These were misdemeanors that he could not overlook ; so he should now punish me for them,—and he did.

This double licking, on top of the scratches that I had received in the woods the night before, caused me to keep pretty quiet for a couple of days, during which time I saw nothing of Frank. I wondered how he had fared. On the third day, after I had finished my morning chores, I asked the Deacon if I might go over to Mr. Gibbs's and see Frank awhile. He gave his consent readily, and I was soon at the door

asking Mrs. Gibbs for Frank ; she said he had gone with his Uncle Joe to fly the new kite on a hill about a quarter of a mile back of the house.

There I found them. They were as glad to see me as I was to see them, for the kite was over six feet tall, and they were unable to raise it alone. It was a beauty, made in the shape of a shield, with the stars and stripes painted on it. There was a good breeze, so Uncle Joe gave me the kite to hold, while he and Frank ran with the string. After two or three failures, and after making slight changes in the bridle, and lengthening the tail, up it went. It was a noble kite, and a grand sight as it walked steadily up in the air, pulling like a team of horses. It took all three of us to hold it, and we enjoyed ourselves splendidly, while Uncle Joe explained to us how to fasten the string so that a kite would soar almost straight overhead, as this one did. He told us stories of California, of the gold diggings, the Indians, the Chinamen, and the overland route, until we thought he was the most wonderful man in the world. When we got tired of holding the kite we tied it to a tree, and amused ourselves by sending up messengers. The wind was good and strong, and when we started a messenger

on the string it would fly up at a great rate, and we could see it go slap against the kite. He had made the kite with a *buzzer*. That is, the head of it was made in the shape of a bow ; on the string of the bow he pasted a strip of paper which vibrated in the wind, and made a loud humming that could be distinctly heard even from the great height at which it floated ; and by pulling and slacking on the string we could make it fairly roar.

## CHAPTER VI

WE GO A-FISHING — AN ENJOYABLE AFTERNOON  
— PRIMITIVE COOKERY — A GRAND SPEC-  
TACLE — A SPLENDID UNCLE — TALES OF  
WONDERFUL EXTRAVAGANCE.

I ASKED Frank if his father had whipped him.

“Did yours?” said he.

“Did he? Yes, twice. Once for lyin’ about the bags, an’ once for gettin’ took up.”

“Oh, crikey! That must ha’ hurt. On your sore back too.”

“You bet it did. I thought I’d die ’fore he got through.”

“Pa says he won’t lick me till my back gits well, ’n’ I’m goin’ to be awful good, ’n’ p’r’aps he’ll fergit it; I hope he will anyhow.”

“So do I. An’ I’ll tell you one thing, Frank, I ain’t goin’ to lie to my pa any more. That’s what he licked me hardest for. An’ besides he says it’s cowardly to lie, ’n’ I guess he’s right; I know the reason I lied to him about the bags was ’cause I was afraid to tell the truth.”




"I never lie to my pa. He always told me that if he ever caught me in a lie, he'd tan the hide off me ; but he says as long 's I tell the truth, he won't lick me any more 'n he can help."

Uncle Joe asked me how long I could stay. I told him I had to be home in time for dinner. "Well," said he, "Frank and I are going fishing down to the pond this afternoon, would you like to go?"

Would I? Yes, indeed, I certainly would. But I had my doubts if I could get permission so soon after my recent disgrace ; but I agreed to ask the Deacon, and if I received permission, to hurry back right after dinner. They said they would wait for me until half-past one o'clock.

"And while you're about it," said Uncle Joe, "ask him to let you come home with us and stay till after dark ; I'll show you something, if this breeze lasts, such as you never saw in your life before."

I told him I hardly dared to ask for so much as that ; but he said a good rule was, "Nothing venture, nothing have," and told me never to miss anything for the want of asking for it. "You know he won't eat you," said he, "and can only say 'no,' at the worst ; and he might say 'yes.'"



So I agreed to ask, and to my surprise and delight, the Deacon said "yes" right off. They told me I need n't bother about bait, as they had plenty ; so, as soon as I had swallowed my dinner, I grabbed my fish-pole and fairly flew over the ground to Frank's. They were nearly ready, and soon all three of us were on our way to the pond. When we got by the pine woods, Frank looked back, and said :

"She's there all right yet, Uncle Joe."

"Oh, yes, she'll stay up as long as the wind lasts and the string don't break," said Uncle Joe. Looking back, I saw that they had left the big kite flying.

I was surprised, and said so. I told Uncle Joe I should think he would be afraid to leave the kite all alone like that.

"Why?" said he, "what can happen to it?"

"If a shower should come up," said I, "it would be spoiled and come down."

"Only a little paper ; that's easily replaced."

"But suppose the string should break, and it should fly away where you could n't find it again?"

"Well, string is cheap ; and it's a small job to build another kite," said he, laughing at my evident concern.

I was surprised to hear him speak so slight-

ingly of that magnificent kite. If it had been mine I should have been so proud, and so careful of it, that I hardly think I should have dared to fly it at all, for fear it might be damaged.

It was a beautiful clear afternoon, almost too fine for fishing. But I knew where there were shady pools that were full of catfish, perch, and chub, with an occasional pickerel. I took them to a likely place, and before we had been there long Uncle Joe pulled out a three-pound chub. Frank and I were catching perch, but the most of our enjoyment was due to Uncle Joe's stories of his adventures in the far west, of which he seemed to have an endless variety. About four o'clock, Frank said he was hungry, and wished he had brought a lunch with him.

"Lunch!" said Uncle Joe. "You're a great fisherman, to go hungry with lots of fine fresh fish laying round under foot. If you'd been on the plains for weeks at a time, as I have, with nothing to eat but meat,—wild meat,—birds, bears, buffaloes, and squirrels,—you'd be tickled to death to get a mess of fine fresh fish. If you're hungry, build a fire and cook some fish; here's matches."

"I ain't got no fryin'-pan."

"Broil 'em! Did n't you ever eat broiled fish?"

They 're splendid. Split your fish open and hold it up to the fire on a stick till it 's cooked. It's fine I tell ye."

"But I ain't got any salt. You can't eat fish without salt."

"Hear him! Salt! No, nor butter, nor pepper, nor lots of other things. Oh, you'd make a fine prospector. I don't suppose you ever ate a meal in your life that was n't seasoned just exactly to your taste; and now you kick for salt."

Frank was shamed by Uncle Joe's talk; so to prove that he was n't so awful finicky, he proceeded to gather sticks and grass, and built a fire. I helped him, for I was getting hungry too, and we soon had a fine fire on a big flat rock. We then cleaned the two biggest chub, and after Uncle Joe showed us how, we stuck them on the ends of two sticks and held them before the fire to broil. They began to smell good at once. This made us so famished that when the flesh turned white we concluded they must be done. They were too hot to eat right away, so we sat under a clump of alders, and blew on them to cool them. Mine was so scorched that I had doubts about its being fit to eat; but presently I saw Frank pulling off little pieces of his, and eating it very gingerly.

"How is it, Frank?" I asked.

"Well," said he, rather dubiously, "it's mighty good; but it's awful sticky." I looked at it, and no wonder he said it was sticky. He had n't warmed it half through. And there he sat eating raw fish, that was like glue. I threw mine down in disgust; and hearing a splash, saw that Uncle Joe had stripped, and gone in swimming. As that was better fun than eating raw fish, Frank and I soon joined him. We stayed in for an hour or more, splashing about, and having a royal good time. Uncle Joe taught us tricks in diving and swimming, the like of which we had never seen before. There was a large island in the middle of the pond, half a mile from the shore. While we were dressing, Uncle Joe remarked that he should think there might be good fishing out there.

"There is," said I; "in the winter we go over there on the ice, and ketch fine messes of pickerel."

"What's the matter with going over there in the summer time?"

"Nothin', only there's no ice, and the water's too sloppy for comfortable walkin'."

"Well, then, we ought to have a boat; and I'll tell you what it is, boys, we will have a

boat. Kites are not the only things I know how to make."

"Oh, can you make a boat, Uncle Joe?" asked Frank.

"Why, certainly. Anybody can build a boat, if they know how, and have the materials and the tools. I'll build a sail-boat, too, so we won't have to depend on 'white ash breezes'."

"What's a 'white ash breeze'?" said I, for neither Frank nor I had ever seen a boat of any description.

Uncle Joe explained that oars, with which boats are rowed, are made of ash. And as rowing is hard work, people usually preferred to sail, if they could have a sail-boat. But as the wind sometimes gave out when they were away from home, they always carried oars to enable them to row back. This was called "coming home with a white ash breeze." While he was explaining this, Frank had cut a stringer and was stringing the fish. There were hardly enough for a mess for Mr. Gibbs's family, so Frank proposed that we go round by way of Miss Jones's and make her a peace-offering of them.

"Not me," said I, "you can go if you like; but I've had enough of Miss Jones to last me for awhile. I'm going to keep away from her."

Frank laughed, and said he was n't so awfully anxious to go himself, but thought that if we could buy the old maid's good-will with a string of fish that we did n't want ourselves, it would be a good bargain.

"Don't you fool yourself," said I. "She'd see through that all right, and probably she'd refuse 'em just to be contrary."

I had permission to stay to supper with Frank that evening, so I went home with them. We saw the big kite, still tugging away faithfully at its string, as though it were paid by the day. I wanted to go over and pull it down; but Uncle Joe said he was n't ready yet. He wanted to use it after dark. We wondered what he could do with a kite after dark; but all he would say was: "Just keep your breeches on and you'll see."

Frank asked his mother if she wanted the fish. She looked at them contemptuously and said: "Them fish? No, I would n't clean 'em for 'em." So we threw them in the pig-pen.

At the supper table Mr. Gibbs asked me if the Deacon had whipped me for my share in the joke on Miss Jones. "Yes, sir," said I, "he whipped me twice; once for lyin', an' once for gettin' took up." He had his mouth full of huckleberry johnny-cake, and he leaned his

head back and laughed till he nearly choked ; though I could n't see for the life of me what there was to laugh at. I guess he would n't either, if he'd been in my shirt when I got the licking.

"Frank 's got his to git yet," said he ; "so he can enjoy it in prospect, an' agin when he gits it."

"Ah, pa ! you ain't a-goin' to lick me, be ye ?"

"'T ain't good manners fer young people to ask leadin' questions of their elders," said Mr. Gibbs. But Frank never got the whipping.

After supper Uncle Joe went to the barn, and presently came back with an armful of paper lanterns. He had made them the day before, and hid them in the barn loft. Neither of us boys knew about them until we saw them ; and when he told us they were lanterns, we laughed at the idea, never having seen any other than the ordinary barn lanterns, made of tin and glass. They were made of different-colored paper, pasted to a round top and bottom of pasteboard, with a small socket in the bottom to hold an inch of candle, and a wire loop in the top.

He told us to get a couple of candles and some matches and come with him. He led the



way to where the kite-string was tied, and, putting a piece of candle in each lantern, he lit them carefully, so as not to set the paper on fire, and after lighting, hung each one on the kite-string by the wire loop. They were too flimsy to stand up, and if they fell over they would be sure to catch fire.

Everything being ready, he sent us off a little way, that we might see the show to better advantage. There were a dozen of the lanterns all told. It was now so dark—the moon not having yet risen—that the kite was out of sight. When everything was ready, Uncle Joe told us to watch out. One after another, and about twenty feet apart, he slid the lanterns up the string, until the wind caught them, and they ran smoothly and rapidly aloft. As we could see neither the kite nor the string, it was a strange and beautiful sight to see those twelve variously colored lights in a long, curving procession, soaring rapidly up into the sky. They swayed gently in the wind as they went, and Frank said that they looked like a lot of fiery beads sliding up a string. When the first one reached the bridle, the kite, which had been invisible before, was suddenly illuminated, so that we saw it quite distinctly. One after another the lanterns arrived, until the whole

twelve hung in a bunch right under the kite, making a many-colored light that was very handsome, and over which the big kite seemed to hover like a mother-hen over her brood. While we were admiring the spectacle and talking about it, a tiny tongue of flame shot out from the bunch, and in an instant the whole mass, kite and all, were blazing. This new and strong light illuminated the country for a great distance, making it, for one brief instant, almost as light as day. Then, the paper being consumed, it went out. The kite-string burned off, and the kite itself, a blazing mass of paper, drifted slowly, whirling round and round before the wind, until only a few sparks were visible as the frame fell rapidly to the ground. When we first saw the flames we both shouted : " Oh, the kite 'll be burned, the kite 'll be burned ! " and we rushed frantically to the string. But by the time we got there the string was burned off, and the kite was a wreck.

Frank began to cry, but Uncle Joe only laughed. He said he knew the kite would be burned when he sent the lanterns up.

" Well, then, what did ye do it for ? " says Frank. " Now I ain't got no kite. An' a lot of the string 's burned off, too. "

“What did I do it for? Why, to make a show, of course—was n’t it fine? Did you ever see anything like it before?”

“Yes, it was fine; an’ I never saw anything like it before; but I’d rather had my kite.”

“Oh, pshaw! don’t let that worry you. I can make another kite in a couple of hours; and as for the string, string’s cheap, and we had more than we needed, anyway; so let’s wind it up and go home; it’s time you boys were abed.”

“Oh, Uncle Joe, will you make me another kite as big as that?”

“Yes, yes—bigger. Bigger and better.”

“When?”

“To-morrow forenoon, the first thing after breakfast; there, are you satisfied now? Or shall I stay up and make it to-night?”

“Oh, yes, that’ll do. You need n’t stay up all night; and I’m awfully obliged to you, Uncle Joe; you’re the best uncle ever a feller had. But it did seem too bad to burn up that fine kite an’ all that nice string, did n’t it, Will?”

“Yes, it was wicked,” said I, for, like all country boys, we had been taught that nothing should ever be destroyed or wasted; so that, even though Uncle Joe promised to build a big-

ger and better one, we could not resign ourselves to the wilful destruction of our plaything.

"You boys make an awful fuss," said Uncle Joe, "about the burning up of that kite. What does it amount to? A few sticks and a little paper, a couple of yards of string and some flour paste. You ought to see the way they burn up fireworks on the Fourth of July in a big city like New York or Boston. Hundreds, yes, thousands of dollars' worth in an evening. What should you think of a single piece that cost more than this whole farm, and would burn out in five minutes?"

"Could n't they use it again?" asked Frank.

"Use it again? No. That's the end of it. That's all 't was made for."

It seemed incredible to us that so much value could be so quickly destroyed *wilfully*. We wound up our line, and, as it was getting late, I bade them good-night, and hurried home, having spent a very pleasant day.

## CHAPTER VII

IN TROUBLE AT SCHOOL — I PLAY A TRICK ON  
MY TEACHER — I AM WELL FLOGGED FOR IT TO  
MY GREAT SURPRISE — CONQUERED — I BE-  
COME HER CHAMPION — A BOYISH FEUD —  
SLANDERED.

ON the next Monday morning school commenced after the summer vacation. Frank and I both attended. We had a new teacher, a young lady. I liked her appearance very much, she seemed so nice and pleasant. Everything went along smoothly for a few days. I was always quick to learn, and as the Deacon made it a rule that I should get my next day's lesson as soon as I came home from school, I was usually at the head of my class. This very rule got me into lots of trouble, for, having no studying to do in school, I was pretty sure to get into mischief. Frank was a dull boy, so I would try to help him. This was a fruitful source of trouble. The teacher found out what was going on, and when Frank would stick in recitation she would watch me out of

the corner of her eye to see if I prompted him. She had already sent a couple of notes to the Deacon, and he had warned me that I was endangering my skin. So, not caring to repeat my experience in the barn, I had been rather careful lately. One noon hour Frank and I arranged to stop at the pond for a swim on the way home. The afternoon was hot, and Frank seemed unusually stupid. I did n't want him to be detained, for that would spoil our sport; so I prompted him a couple of times, and was warned by the teacher that, if I did it again, she would punish me. He blundered along, managing to save himself until it came to History. When she asked him in what year Columbus discovered America, he stuck dead. She might as well have asked him in what year apple pie was invented, for all poor Frank knew. He looked at me appealingly, but the teacher was watching me. She would ask a question three times; then, if the scholar was unable to answer, it was passed on to the next, and a failure marked against the one who had missed. After she asked Frank the second time, I knew he could never answer it. I had no chance to post him, and things were getting desperate. Just as she opened her lips to repeat the question for the last time, I blurted

out, so that every one in the room could hear me, "Fourteen ninety-two."

She flushed to the roots of her hair. I could see that she was mad clear through. "William Kimball," said she, "step this way." At the same time she reached for the big ruler.

"I told you I should punish you if you prompted again. Hold out your hand!" I held out my hand, and she made a crack at it. I snatched it quickly away, and she hit herself a cruel blow on the right knee. Again she flushed, bit her lips, paled, and flushed again. She laid the ruler back on the desk, and as she steadied herself by it, she asked me if I had a knife.

"Yes, ma'am," said I, wondering if she was going to cut my throat.

"Go out and cut me a good strong switch."

"Yes, ma'am."

I went out, and did what we often hear of people doing, cut a stick for my own back. I felt that I was too big to be flogged by a girl-teacher before a room full of scholars.

I went down by the brook and cut a young alder—this season's growth—straight and smooth. I nicked the bark round in several places near the butt, rapped it with my knife handle until it was loose, and then, slipping it back, cut

the stick in two and shoved the bark back over the cut again. I did this in three or four places, so that the stick was in several sections when I carried it in to her. She laid it on the desk, and turning to the scholars, said :

“Children, it now becomes my painful duty to administer, for the first time, corporal punishment to one of your number. I had hoped to escape this unpleasant duty ; but you have all seen how William Kimball has tried my patience, and defied my authority.” Then turning to me she said, “William, it pains me more than you can possibly understand to be obliged to punish you in this manner. I had hoped to rule my scholars by the power of love alone, and I have borne with your misdeeds until the discipline of the school has become endangered. I shall now punish you severely ; but I wish you to understand that I do it reluctantly and in sorrow. Take off your jacket.”

I could hardly keep my face straight as I fancied the scene that was to follow this solemn exhortation. And yet I felt rather ashamed, when I found what a serious matter she considered it, and how evidently hurt she was that the necessity should have arisen. She



was a slight, frail, blue-eyed, light-haired young woman, not more than seventeen or eighteen years of age ; and as I slowly removed my jacket, trying meanwhile to screw my face into a suitable expression of fear, I repented having tampered with the switch. I might have allowed her the satisfaction of flogging me, I thought, for surely that fragile arm could not inflict very painful blows. And after what she had said, I surmised that it was her intention to let me off easy, so perhaps I had overdone it in my smartness.

She stepped briskly up to me, seized hold of my collar with surprising vigor, raised the switch, and brought it down with what was intended to be a vicious cut ; but before it touched me it flew into several pieces, some of them flying clear across the floor. There was an unmistakable titter throughout the school. Miss Lane looked at the short stub in her hand, and comprehended the situation at once. As I looked round at her, with a conceited grin at the smart trick I had played, I saw that red wave run over her face again. She closed her lips tightly, her eyes flashed, and without a word she commenced to snake me towards her desk. The short quick jerks that she applied to my collar kept me in such rapid

and uncertain motion that I had no chance to resist. She was as strong as a little horse. The next thing I knew she was seated beside her desk, I was lying across her lap, and that big ruler was coming down on my sitting-down place with a force, speed, and regularity that made it seem to be operated by machinery. I held my breath until I was nearly bursting, hoping I should be able to stand it. Vain hope! That frail arm seemed to be made of tempered steel. Thicker and faster the blows came, until at last I let a yell out of me that must have done her heart good. As I continued to howl, she soon stopped the performance, righted me, and leading me to the far corner of the room, told me to stand with my face to the wall until she gave me permission to be seated. I obeyed her implicitly. If she had told me to stand on my head I should have tried my level best to do it—so rapidly had my respect for her increased in the last few minutes.

Frank and I did n't go in swimming that afternoon. We were both "kep' in," he to learn his lesson, I for punishment. After Frank had recited, she called me to her and talked to me seriously for nearly an hour. After lecturing me on my evil conduct, she told me about herself. Her father had been

killed a couple of years before by an explosion in a quarry, leaving her mother with three children to support, and a mortgage on the place. She had to leave school and help her mother take care of the two little brothers ; but her teacher, who took a great interest in her, gave her lessons in the evenings ; so that by hard study, after working all day, she became qualified for teaching. She told me of the days of anxiety which followed her application for our school, and of the joy that was in their little family when she received notice of her appointment. Long before she had finished telling me her story my face was buried in her lap, and I was blubbering like a good fellow.

“Now, Willie,” said she, laying her hand affectionately on my head and calling forth a fresh outburst of tears, “you know how important it is for me to make a success of this school ; you are a bright boy, and you can help in many ways to make my work pleasant. I have noticed that you are a kind of leading spirit among the other boys ; won’t you use your influence with them to get them to behave themselves, and to study their lessons ?”

I promised between my sobs that I would lick the first feller that I heard say a word

against her. "No," said she, "I would n't have you do anything of the kind. All I ask is that you set them a good example and induce them to follow it." This I readily promised to do, and, locking the schoolhouse door, we proceeded, hand in hand, towards home. As we passed down the long village street, I saw many wondering glances turned our way, and though I felt safe at the time—being fortified by the teacher's presence—I knew that the next day I would "get it."

That evening, as Frank and I were seated on two large stones behind his father's barn, I told him of my interview with the teacher. "She's the best teacher we ever had, Frank," said I, "an' I like her ; I 'm goin' to do all I can to help her, an' I want you to help too ; will you ?"

"Yes," said Frank, "if there's anything I can do ; I don't see what there is."

"I'll tell you what you can do right off. You can learn your lessons. I'll help you, an' it'll not only make it pleasant for her, but it'll be good for you too."

"It's darn hard to study," said Frank dubiously.

"Hard ? Well, gosh ! don't you never expect to have to do anything that's hard ? 'T ain't

so awful hard when you get right at it. Have you got your lessons for to-morrow ?”

“No, ’course I ain’t ; I don’t never study out o’ school.”

“That’s where you make a mistake. I’ve got mine, an’ if you ’ll come in the house I’ll help you so you can learn the whole thing in an hour.” After considerable hanging back, he finally agreed. And though he did n’t thoroughly learn them, he got them so nearly by heart that I was satisfied.

The next morning, as Frank and I were jogging along to school, we saw Walt Baker and Cy Livingstone coming down the cross-road from the “ Woods neighborhood.” Walter was the son of one of the richest men in the place. His father, Col. James Baker, owned a large cabinet-making factory. Walter wore shoes and stockings all summer, and was never seen without a clean collar and tie. He neglected no opportunity to put on airs over us poorer boys, but, being of a cowardly disposition, he was more apt to do us a mean, underhanded turn than to come out openly. He was a sneak and liar ; and I remember that when the Deacon told me that all liars were sneaks and cowards, I thought at once of Walt Baker, and resolved that I would never be like him.

He had been a kind of pet with most of our teachers ; for, his father being chairman of the board of selectmen and school committee, I suppose they thought it good policy to favor his son. I knew that he saw me walking home with the teacher the previous evening, and of course he knew all about the licking she gave me.

Cy Livingstone's father was foreman in Mr. Baker's factory. Naturally, the two boys were cronies, though Walter lorded it over Cy shamefully, and had often been heard to threaten to get his father discharged, if Cy did n't do as he told him. As Cy was never known to resent any of these insults, you can judge what kind of a fellow he was.

There was a feud existing between the faction represented by these two young aristocrats and that to which Frank and I belonged. From the cross-road to the school-house, we all travelled the same road ; and many a time had we chased and stoned the two young gentlemen, who said they would have fought us if it had n't been for getting their clothes dirty. As a little more or less dirt would not hurt our clothes, we always jeered at that argument, and charged them with cowardice, which I guess was about right.

When they saw us this morning, they hung back until we had crossed the junction. Then, falling in behind, Walter chanted, in a sing-song voice, "Who—got—licked—yes—ter—day?" Then they both joined in the chorus: "Sweet — William — the — teacher's — pet." They kept this up until I could stand it no longer. We both loitered a little until they gained on us. Then, dropping our books, we turned, caught them unawares, and gave them a good drubbing, Master Baker getting a black eye, and Master Livingstone a swollen lip, that made him talk as if he had a mouthful of hot mush. They reported us to the teacher, and she called us up for an explanation. I told her that it was nobody's business if I did get licked in school, and I wouldn't allow those fellers to holler' after me in the road. She said to them: "I am sorry that you so far forgot your manners as to shout insulting language at your schoolmates. I hope, now that I have shown you how wrong it is, that you feel sorry for it, do you not?" "Yes, ma'am," said they, both together. "And are you willing to forgive William and Frank for what they did to you?" "Yes, ma'am," again.

Turning to Frank and me, she said: "Are

you not sorry for what you have done to your two schoolmates?"

"No, ma'am," said we.

"What! you are not sorry for having struck and hurt them?"

"No, ma'am," said I, "they brought it on themselves; and if we had n't licked 'em, they would have kep' it up all summer; all they're sorry for is that we ketched 'em."

"I'm afraid you have forgotten already, William, what you promised me yesterday," said Miss Lane.

"No, ma'am," said I, "I did n't promise to let anybody hoot after me in the road; an' I won't neither. I ain't sorry for punchin' Walt Baker, an' I'll do it again, if he gives me occasion to."

She drew a long breath, said: "I'm afraid you're a bad boy, William," and sent us to our seats; but she kept Frank and me in at recess.

Frank had his lessons perfect that day, and it was such a pleasant sensation that I never had to coax him to study after that. Walter told his father that Frank and I had waylaid him and Cy, and nearly killed them. Mr. Baker came to our house that evening, and told the Deacon he ought to send me to the reform school. He said I had got most of the



boys in town so depraved that they would make likely jail-birds ; and those that were too respectable to be influenced by me I tried to kill. I denied it all, of course, and after he went away I told the whole story to the Deacon and Mrs. Wakeman. Mrs. Wakeman said that she never did like that Baker boy ; he had a hang-dog, mean look. Whether her sympathy turned the scale in my favor, I don't know ; but anyway the Deacon contented himself with giving me a severe lecture. He said he did n't want any trouble with his neighbors. He had always lived in peace with them, and he warned me that he was getting tired of hearing bad reports about me.

## CHAPTER VIII

TEMPTATION — MORE TROUBLE WITH MISS JONES  
— UNCLE JOE BUILDS A BOAT — “POOR  
FRANK” — WE GET SQUARE WITH MISS JONES  
AT LAST.

OUR teacher had become a great favorite. Every morning her desk was loaded with flowers. Mrs. Wakeman had a choice tea-rose, which she treasured highly. It was seldom any one got a flower from it; but nearly every morning she gave me one for Miss Lane.

The road passed Miss Jones's orchard. Just inside the wall there was a large tree grafted with “Sam Abbots,” a luscious fall apple, named for the man who introduced them into that section of the country. Miss Jones was very choice of them, and it was believed by the boys that she seldom lost sight of the tree until they were harvested. As the season advanced, we could see the great delicious apples, ripening in the summer sun, and they were very tempting. One morning I told Frank I

would give almost anything for just one of those Sam Abbots, for Miss Lane.

"Yes, or even for ourselves," says Frank.

"Yes, I'd like one, but I can stan' it. I would n't care if I could get one for Miss Lane ; she don't look well this hot weather, an' I know it would go nice with her lunch."

"Why don't ye climb over an' get one, then ? Miss Jones ain't got no dog ; an' ye could get half a dozen an' get away again before she could ketch ye."

"I know that all right ; 't ain't her I'm afraid of, it's pa. He told me not to let him hear any more bad reports about me for a while, an' I ain't a-goin to if I can help it."

"Ho ! I ain't afraid. My pa would n't lick me for her." And without more ado Frank was over the wall, and clubbing the tree. They were dead ripe, so at the very first shot down came a dozen or more. But Miss Jones saw what was going on, and out she came, yelling like a fury. She called Frank everything but a gentleman's son, and threw sticks and stones as she ran. He, knowing what a poor shot she was, and what a slow runner, picked up all the apples he had knocked off, and passed them over the wall in his hat to me.

"Oh, it's you two agin, is it ? All right !

I'll git ye both took up agin, you see if I don't. You won't git off so easy this time, nuther." Here Frank threw an apple core and took her square in the eye. She clapped both hands over it, and went back into the house screeching fit to raise the dead.

"Now, Frank," said I, "we're in for it as sure as you're born. I wish you'd let the apples alone. Pa'll lick me for this worse'n he did before."

"Oh, I guess not. What should he lick you for? You didn't steal 'em; 't was me; an' I'll tell her so, too, the stingy old thing. If she'd give a feller an apple once in a while, we would n't have to steal 'em. I ain't afraid. My pa won't lick me for her."

On the way home from school that afternoon I went into the dooryard with Frank, to get a drink of water. Just before we got to the well we heard the shrill voice of Miss Jones in the parlor, the windows being open. She had evidently come over to report. We crept up to the side of the house and listened. She was talking to Mrs. Gibbs, and how her tongue did run!

She had just finished making her report as we came up, and without stopping to catch her breath, continued:

“Did ye ever keep guinea fowls, Mis’ Gibbs?”

“No, I never cared for ’em.”

“Wal, I never kep ’em myself, but our folks allus used to have ’em ; an’ I got kinder tired of seein’ nothing but Cochin-Chinas round, so I got a settin’ of guinea hens’ eggs, from Mis’ Noah Shelburne, when I was over there with a load o’ truck about a month ago ; an’ as one o’ my Dorkins started in ter set a few days afterwards, I jest watched her, an’ the first time I ketched her offen the nest, I changed them eggs, an’ put the guinea hen’s under her. She made her nest in an old half bushel measure, ’way over in a dark corner by the hoss stall, an’ I’m so ’fraid that when she sees them guinea chicks she’ll pick ’em to death, that I go out every morning when I first git up, an’ the ol’ hen’s out huntin’ for grasshoppers an’ bugs, an’ I feel in the nest to see if they ’re out, ’cause as soon ’s they ’re hatched, I’m a-goin’ to take ’em in the house an’ bring ’em up by han’—why, how do you do, Mr. Gibbs? I’ve jest be’n a-tellin’ Mis’ Gibbs about that boy o’ yourn. No longer ago’n this mornin’ he was in my orchard knockin’ down Sam Abbots. I’ve be’n watchin’ that tree all summer. I want them apples for the pastor’s donation party this fall—”

“Hold on a bit, Miss Jones. What’s all the

trouble? What do you want? Has Frank been doin' anything to ye?"

"Has he? Don't ye see how red an' watery my left eye is? I've had tea-leaves bandaged on to it all day long. That boy o' yourn, after robbin' my orchard, throwed a stone an' hit me in the eye—"

"I did n't, pa, 'twas an apple core," shouted Frank, who, in his excitement forgot that we were eavesdropping.

"Aha! Come in here, young man," said his father, "an' let's get at the rights o' this thing."

Frank and I went round to the door and entered. As soon as Miss Jones caught sight of us she jumped up, and shaking her parasol at us, screamed out: "There they be! There's the two on 'em! They're jest alike! Oh you vipers! You sons of Belial! You'll both be hung yit, an' I only hope to live to see it—"

"Belle Jones, ain't you ashamed of yourself,—a-tellin' my boy he'll be hung?" interrupted Mrs. Gibbs.

"No, I hain't. If he ain't hung, he ought to be—"

"Now, will you tell me jest exactly what the boy's done?" asked Mr. Gibbs.

"Hain't I told ye? He stole my Sam Abbots, an' then stoned me 'most to death 'cause I spoke to him about it."

"What have you got to say to that, Frank?"

"I did knock a few apples off her tree, pa; an' then when she called me a thief, an' a gallus bird, an' throwed sticks an stones at me, I shied an apple core at her, but I did n't mean to hit her."

"Very well. Now, Miss Jones, I shall punish Frank for stealin' your apples, an' for hittin' you with that apple-core. But I do think, it's mighty unneighborly of you to make such a fuss over a few apples. Boys always did, an' I s'pose always will, steal apples. I remember when you was sixteen or seventeen years old, you stole a lamb from my father; an' for fear you'd git found out, you tied its legs together an' throwed it in the pond. Caleb Wright seen ye do it, an' come over to our house an' told father; but he did n't make no such a terrible fuss over it."

As this tale of one of her early shortcomings was related, Miss Jones's face became as red as a flame; and rising in a great flutter she stumped out of the house. I guess the exposure rather upset her, for instead of reporting me to the Deacon, she went straight home.

As Frank was standing with his hands behind his back and his head hanging, I remembered that he had a painful interview to go through with his father, so, after twirling my hat awkwardly, and shifting uneasily from one foot to the other, I said sheepishly, "Wal, I guess I'll go home." As no one made any answer, I sneaked out, and with lots of trouble on my mind, expecting to find Miss Jones there before me, I slowly made my way home.

During all this time, Uncle Joe was busy building a boat. Of course Frank and I were greatly interested, never having seen a boat in our lives, and we helped him all we could, which was n't very much, and hindered him a good deal by asking questions. I would start for school half an hour earlier than usual, so I could stop at Frank's and admire the boat; we would walk round her—being careful not to touch anything—and guess, and wonder what she would be like. In school we looked at the pictures in the Geography, of Indians in their birch canoes, and tried hard to think that our boat looked like them. After school we ran nearly all the way home, studied our lessons in a hurry, hustled through our chores, and then out to the barn, to watch and help Uncle Joe. As I had nearly a quarter of a mile to



come from our house, Frank had a great deal more time to learn boat-building than I had. He would tell me on the way to and from school, what he knew about centre-boards and leeway, tacking, and jibing, and many other things that had come brand new into our lives.

We would watch every move that Uncle Joe made ; and if we thought he wanted a nail, or brad-awl, or anything that was not actually in his hand, we would bump our heads together in our haste to hand it to him.

The boat was about fifteen feet long ; in shape, like a fisherman's dory, two feet and a half wide, at the widest place, and eighteen inches deep. The bottom was built of two layers of half-inch Hackmetack. The outside layer ran lengthways, and the inner crossways. These cross-pieces were cut seven-eighths of an inch short on each end, so that when they were fastened on the others they left a groove, or channel, as Uncle Joe called it, for the lower edge of the side to fit in.

The sides were each made of a single piece of clear fine board, seven-eighths of an inch thick, and eighteen inches wide. First, he fastened the stem and stern to the bottom. Then he fastened one end of each of the side

pieces to the side of the stern, and, keeping the lower edge always hard down in the channel, he brought the two sides along together, until they met at the stem. It was surprising how nicely the sides flared out, as they were bent around. In order to fasten them securely to the bottom, Uncle Joe sent us down in the pasture to a place that was covered with scrub oaks, and we cut a lot of *knees*.

We found by digging at the foot of a young oak, that it nearly always had one large main root. This root, with the trunk, formed a *knee*. Under Uncle Joe's direction we trimmed them up roughly, and kiln-dried them in Mrs. Gibbs's stove oven, until they were as dry as a bone and as hard as—well, as hard as oak. Having got the sides temporarily fastened to the bottom, it now became necessary to fit the knees into the angle formed by the bottom and the side in such a manner that they would *look* straight across at each other in pairs; for afterwards there had to be a straight piece running across the bottom connecting each pair of knees. As the angle between the bottom and sides was not alike in any two places, and as the knees themselves were so hard, this proved to be a long job. We had cut a good many more than we needed; so

Uncle Joe, after telling us how to do it, let us go ahead and fit them. To his surprise, and our own too, for that matter, we did first-rate.

It was just at this time that Miss Jones came round with her tale of woe. Mr. Gibbs was a humane man, and thought the world of Frank, so he seldom whipped him. But he had promised Miss Jones that Frank should be punished ; and knowing how interested we were in our work, he forbade him going near, or even looking at, the boat for three days.

Poor Frank ! He begged his father to whip him and have done with it. But Mr. Gibbs, seeing how effective the punishment was, refused to change it.

The next morning, supposing that Frank had been severely whipped the night before, I had n't the heart to call for him, so I loitered along on my way to school. When I came in sight of his house, he was waiting for me. He motioned to me to hurry up. I ran up to him, and asked what was the matter.

"Matter enough. We'll be late for school if you don't hurry up. Do you know what time it is ?"

"'Bout half-past eight."

"Twenty minutes to nine. An' ma says she thinks our clock's a little slow, too."

"Say, Frank, did your father lick ye last night?"

"Lick me? No. He done a blame sight worse. He forbid me goin' near, or even lookin' at, the boat, for three days."

"Gosh!!"

"Tough, ain't it?"

"Tough? I sh'd say so. I'd rather take a lickin' an' have it over with."

"So would I, an' I told him so. But say, Will, he did n't say I should n't hear how she was gittin' along; so you can tell me every mornin' how much is done. Will ye?"

"Of course."

"An' say, Will, I've thought of a trick to play on that old maid that'll partly square us for what she's done."

"Now, here, I don't think we'd better bother her any more. We don't never seem to have no luck with the tricks that we try to play on her. And the worst of it is, that I dare n't lie about anything. I promised pa that I would n't, an' I won't. So if he sh'd ask me anything about it, I'd have to tell."

"Oh, that's all right. The trick I'm thinkin' about, she'll never know who done it. An' even if she finds out, I'll take all the blame."

I had grave doubts as to whether his taking

the blame would save me from the Deacon's clutches if we were found out—as I surely believed we would be. But the prospect of playing a trick on Miss Jones was so alluring that I listened eagerly to his proposition ; and when he got through I promised to help, let the consequences be what they might.

That afternoon Frank got an old two-quart tin pail, with a cover to it, and we went out to a lot behind his house that was famous for snakes,—green and black. We worked like hired men, and before dark, had our pail so full of young snakes—none of them over six inches long—that we could hardly get the cover on. To make sure of them we tied it with a string. Then we hid it under the corn bin, and I went home. After supper I went to an ash heap behind the woodshed, where Mrs. Wakeman threw all her rubbish, and picked up about a quart of eggshells. I took them to the well and washed them clean. Then I found an old flower-pot, and putting them into it, set them away in the woodshed where I could put my hand on them in the dark.

By nine o'clock the house was dark and quiet. Silently I crept out of bed, and, taking my shirt and trousers on my arm, stole, with fluttering heart, down the creaky stairs. As I

passed the door of the Deacon's room, I heard Mrs. Wakeman say :

"Pa, I don't believe you shet the back door after ye when ye come in from the barn : seems to me I hear it creakin'."

"Oh, wal," said the Deacon sleepily, "that 's all right, let it creak if it wants to ; 't won't hurt nothin'."

But she insisted that he should get up and shut it. As I tiptoed hastily through the kitchen, I stumbled plump over a chair, making as much noise in the silent night as though I had knocked over the church steeple.

"I declare," said Mrs. Wakeman, "if the spotted calf hain't got into the kitchen ! Pa ! pa ! wake up ! the spotted calf 's in the kitchen an' he 'll upset the churn."

As I flew through the open door, I heard the Deacon open his door and say, "Ding bang that calf, I 'll make veal o' him to-morrow, or my name hain't Silas Wakeman ; shoo ! git out o' here—" but I was out, and off to Frank's with my eggshells. I met him a little way up the road with a half-bushel measure and the pail of snakes. We crept unperceived into Miss Jones' barn, and, following the description she gave Mrs. Gibbs, found the half bushel containing the setting hen. Carefully I picked

it up, and slowly—to avoid stubbing my toe—carried it to the opposite side of the barn. In the mean time, Frank had replaced it with the one he brought from home, into which he dumped the young snakes and eggshells. We then withdrew to the haymow and lay down to sleep.

Just as I was dozing comfortably off, Frank said :

“ Hey, Will ! ”

“ Hello ! ”

“ How are you for wakin’ up in the mornin’ ? Can ye wake up early ? ”

“ I never wake up. Ma always has to call me. ”

“ Me too. How are we goin’ to wake up in time to see Miss Jones find the snakes ? ”

“ Darned if I know. ”

I was just entering the Land of Nod again, when once more Frank called out :

“ Say, Will, I ’ll tell ye how we ’ll fix it. I ’ll find the pitchfork an’ stan’ it up agin the barn door ; so ’t when she opens it, it ’ll fall on her head, an’ then she ’ll holler, an’ that ’ll wake us up. What do ye say ? ”

“ Good ! ” said I, “ go ahead ! ” only too glad to think he had solved the problem at last, so I could go to sleep.

It did n't seem as if I had been asleep but a few minutes when I heard a dreadful clattering down below, and Miss Jones exclaiming: "Land o' Goshen ! what's that !" as the fork handle rolled along the door. And a moment afterwards, when it hit her : " Murder ! murder ! Thieves ! Fire !" And away she ran, screaming, towards the house.

"Pshaw !" said Frank, "our cake's dough agin. She's scared half to death, an' won't come back no more."

But I have remarked before that Miss Arabella was true grit. Frank had hardly finished speaking when, back she came, armed with the rolling-pin. From living alone so long she had acquired a habit of talking to herself. So, as she approached, we could hear her saying :

"Drat 'em ! I suppose they think 'cause I'm a lone woman they kin rob me, an' club me over the head, an' I can't help myself ; but I'll show 'em, 't when they git me riled, I'm good for any two pesky chicken thieves in the county. Jest's like's not they've broke up Dorkin' at the last minute, an' I sha'n't git no guinea chicks after all my fussin'—"

Here she stopped and peered cautiously into the barn. The pitchfork lay half out the



door. Grabbing hold of it, she yanked it quickly outside.

"Come out here, ye villains! I see ye. Don't think ye kin git away from me. I've got a deadly weepoon in my hand, an' it's loaded tew. But if ye come out an' go 'long about yer business, I 'll let ye be."

After waiting awhile and receiving no answer, she ventured cautiously inside the door and looked round. After looking and listening awhile, she broke out with :

"Wal, Iswanny! I b'lieve I'm gittin' fooler 'n' fooler. Come to think, I remember now that I left the fork stannin' there myself las' night." At this Frank nearly snickered aloud.

She strode boldly over to the dark corner by the "hoss stall," and, peering down into the measure, remarked : "Seems as if them eggs don't look jest as they did. I wonder if they're hatched? I don't hear no yippin'." She reached cautiously down into the measure. "Sakes alive! What's that?" she exclaimed. She withdrew her hand, and held up to the light a handful of wriggling, squirming snakes, each one of which, I have no doubt, looked like a great scaly monster to her. With one horrified yell she dropped them on

the barn floor. One little fellow fell inside her flowing sleeve.

She grabbed the sleeve, and ran, screaming frantically, from the barn.

Dominie Whitehead, in order to eke out his slender salary as parson of the Methodist meeting-house, practised as a veterinary. On this particular morning the blacksmith had called on him early to attend a sick cow, and it so happened that they were just driving by when Miss Jones came, yelling and clutching her sleeve, from the barn. Naturally they stopped to see what the trouble was. As soon as she could control her voice, she told them that she had been set upon, and beaten nearly to death, by two masked robbers, when she attempted to enter her barn. She said that she returned to the house, and, arming herself with the rolling-pin, had beaten them both until they fled over the fence to the woods. Then, when she went to look at her "settin'" of guinea hen's eggs, she found that they had hatched out snakes.

"Snakes? Sister Jones, did you say snakes?" asked the Dominie, at the same time approaching his face close to hers and sniffing suspiciously.

"Yes, I said *snakes*," she replied defiantly ;

but at the same time coloring painfully. The Dominie shook his head sorrowfully, saying, "Alas, my dear sister, has it indeed gone so far with you as that? I fear I shall have to notify the chairman of the board of selectmen, and have your case looked after. I shall certainly bring it up at the next conference of the church board; it is n't safe to allow a person of your habits to associate with the lambs of the flock. You should be placed under restraint, for your own good, as well as that of others."

At this, Miss Jones broke down and wept hysterically.

"Oh, Parson, Parson! don't say that! 'T ain't what you think. I know I took a couple of tablespoonfuls of rum this mornin',—I always do before goin' out in the air;—but if you think that's what ails me, you come right out here to the barn, an' I'll show ye them snakes. Then, I guess you'll be ashamed of your unchristian suspicions."

Frank and I had seen and heard all that passed through the numerous cracks and knot-holes in the side of the barn. As the melancholy procession started, headed by Miss Jones, the same idea struck us both at once.

Like a couple of squirrels we descended to the floor, and each grabbing one of the

measures, we exchanged them. We barely had time to hide again when they entered. Miss Jones took a rake, and reaching for the measure, hauled it into the middle of the floor, right under the Dominie's nose. Without looking into it herself, she asked triumphantly : " There, Parson, what do you call them ? "

The Dominie gazed soberly into the measure for a few seconds, and then, turning to her, asked : " Do these appear to you to be snakes, Sister Jones ? "

" Wal, I sh'd say they dew. Yes. What do they appear to you to be, Parson ? "

" What should you call 'em, Brother Blake ? "

" Guinea chickens. An' fine ones tew. "

" Wha-a-t ? " cried Miss Arabella, " are you both crazy ? " She approached the measure, and took one startled look. Then she fled to the house, slamming the door after her. The Dominie and the blacksmith left the barn, shaking their heads, and commenting on the hidden vices of some people. When the coast was clear, I said to Frank : " There 'll be a fine hullabaloo about this. We 'll be suspected, an' we 'll need to be able to prove where we 've been ; 'cause our folks has called us both long before now. Let's go down to the pond an' take a swim. " He agreed, but as it was near



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breakfast time we took only one plunge—just enough to wet our hair—and hurried home.

In order to save her standing in the church, and to keep her affairs out of the hands of the town officers, Miss Jones was obliged to take the pledge. This gave her failing such publicity that she became very meek, and was careful not to hunt for trouble as she had been in the habit of doing; so that, after all, our joke succeeded better than we had expected.

## CHAPTER IX

LAUNCH OF THE "POND LILY" — WE BECOME  
VERY POPULAR — "GET ABOARD" — GREEN  
SAILORS — WHITE ASH BREEZES — OVERBOARD  
— A TARDY RESCUE — UNCLE JOE'S LECTURE  
— STRANDED.

It was a great day when we got our boat into the water. We had hardly been able to sleep for a week beforehand, so anxious were we to get her afloat. While Uncle Joe was busy making the sail and getting the mast and rigging into shape, Frank and I, under his directions, caulked the seams with wicking soaked in whitelead. This we shoved into the cracks with a couple of old case knives and then puttied over. After that we gave her two coats of paint, and could hardly wait for it to dry. But Uncle Joe was firm, so we just *had* to wait a whole week after she was done. She was a beauty. Her bottom was dark green; there was a white stripe just above the water line; and her topsides were a handsome gray.



All the boys in town came as often as they could to see and admire. After Frank, I was the most envied, and I noticed during those days, that if either of us expressed a wish for anything belonging to any of the other boys, it was almost always pressed upon us at once; and the givers seemed pleased to have us accept their offerings.

When the eventful day arrived, the whole school assembled in front of Mr. Gibbs's house. We had plenty of help to load her into the wagon, and an admiring crowd followed us to the pond, some running ahead, others alongside, and the rest tagging along in the dust behind, all happy and excited. Uncle Joe drove down to a place where there was a nice smooth beach, and backed the hind wheels of the wagon right into the water. He had a couple of joists fastened about eighteen inches apart. These he shoved out into the water, fastening the other ends to the tail board of the wagon. He made the end of the painter fast to a spoke of the hind wheel; then we lifted her up and put a roller under her. Everything being ready, Uncle Joe ordered all the boys but Frank away from the wagon. Getting hold on each side of the bow they commenced to shove. When the roller got her

weight, she went easy, and they walked her along, until at last she got away from them and rolled grandly down the ways amid a deafening cheer from the assembled boys and girls. She hit the water with a great splash, and ran out bobbing and nodding to us, until the painter brought her up with a snap. And, slowly coming ahead again, she ran her nose up on the sand. As she struck the water, Uncle Joe raised his hat, and shouted so as to be heard above all the rest, "I christen thee 'Pond Lily.'"

He brought out three handsome name boards, with the name "Pond Lily," on them in gold letters. These he nailed, one across the stern, and one at each bow. Then he told Frank and me to untie the painter and get aboard. Frank said to me: "I'll untie the painter, Will, and you get a board."

"I'm sure," said I, "I don't know where I'll get a board here. There ain't none. The fences are all stone walls, an' there ain't a sign of a board anywhere. I wonder what he wants a board for anyhow?"

"I dunno," said Frank, "but I s'pose he does, so you'll have to get one, even if you have to go 'way back to the house after it." Frank stood holding the painter, while I aimlessly hunted

for the board I knew I'd never find. Uncle Joe was hanging the rudder. Having got that done, he said: "Come, what are you fellows standing there for? Ain't ye never goin' to get aboard?"

"How big a board do you want?" I asked.

"Hey?"

"How big a board do you want? I'll go back to the house an' get one; there ain't none here."

"Gosh all hemlock! But you fellers are countrymen. I don't want a board. I want you two to *get aboard*. Get aboard the boat. Come in. Do you understand now?"

We understood so well that we nearly upset her by both trying to climb in together on the same side. This called for more directions from Uncle Joe, and at last we were "aboard."

How ticklish she was! It seemed as if every minute she was going to go over. We crouched down in the bottom and hung onto the sides; not that we feared a ducking—we could both swim like frogs—but we did n't want to hurt the boat.

"Now, Frank," said Uncle Joe, "you're the stroke, and Will's the bow. You sit here on this thwart—not that way, turn your face aft.

That's it. Now, Will, stand up ! Take your oar and stick it down into the sand ahead ! That's it. Now, shove off !"

I gave a mighty shove. The boat shot from under me as if her bottom had been greased, and overboard I went. The crowd ashore laughed, and when I picked myself up, I saw the boat twenty-five or thirty feet away. Uncle Joe took Frank's oar, and sculled her in. I got aboard, and you can bet I did n't make the same mistake again. We got out in the pond, and took our first lesson in rowing. We tried Uncle Joe's patience terribly. He said we were the worst he ever saw, and I guess we were. We wanted to go fast ; so when we got our oar blades in the water, we would give a mighty pull, and if everything went just right, she would give a leap ahead that filled us with delight. But it was seldom that everything did go just right. If Frank's oar turned in his hand or slipped out of water, he would come back and bump his head on mine, bruising my fingers. And as mine usually held when his let go, I would slue the boat half round. Or, if it was mine that let go and his that held, I would fall over backwards, and kick him in the back of the head. It didn't take us long at that rate to learn that Uncle Joe's

advice, to "take it easy," was worth listening to.

We did n't accomplish much the first day, except to blister our hands and raise lumps on the backs of our heads. This was "crab catching." We did manage to get well out into the middle of the pond, and it seemed as if we should never get back. But at last we made a landing, hauled our boat up into the bushes, and, taking the oars and rudder, started for home, hot, tired, and sore, but proud and happy.

"I thought you did n't approve of white ash breezes, Uncle Joe," said Frank, as we walked along.

"I don't," said he.

"Well, then, why did you make us pull all the afternoon? Why did n't we take the mast and sail along?"

"Because the white ash breeze is the first thing to learn. Suppose you learned to sail her first. You'd never want to learn to pull after that. Then if you got becalmed, or anything happened to your sail or mast, when you were up to the other end of the pond, you'd be in a nice fix, would n't you? Have to leave your boat there, and walk home through the woods."

"How long will it take us to learn to row?"

"Well, according to the progress you made this afternoon, I should say, that by the time you're twenty-one, you might be able to pull fairly well."

"Oh, gosh!" said we both together. But Uncle Joe laughed, and said he was only joking. "In a couple of afternoons," said he, "you'll be able to handle her all right." And sure enough before the week was over we were able to pull a fairly good stroke, and keep it up for hours without getting tired. We acquired an easy swing that enabled us to keep the boat going at a fine rate, with very little exertion.

On Saturday, Uncle Joe told us to take the mast and sail along. It was a sprit-sail; that is, it had no gaff, nor boom. The luff was laced to the mast. One end of the sprit, a long, thin stick, was stuck into a loop in the outer upper corner. All that was necessary to set the sail was to shove the sprit up, until the lower end could be put into another loop hanging at the mast. It then stood diagonally across the sail, stretching it so the wind could get hold of it. It was necessary of course to have the boat in such a position that the wind could blow into the sail. There was a rope

fast to the after lower corner, called "the sheet." This was held in one hand, while steering with the other. By hauling in or slacking out on the sheet, as the wind shifted, or Uncle Joe changed the course, the sail was kept drawing. He impressed it on us particularly never to make the sheet fast. For, in case of a sudden puff of wind, which might upset us, by letting it go, the sail would fly out, like a flag, and lose its power.

To our surprise, he made us put a lot of heavy, flat stones in her before we started. Frank said he should think a boat, like a wagon, would go faster empty than loaded; but we found very soon that we needed the stone ballast to keep her from upsetting. It seemed as if that was the principal thing the wind tried to do to her. If she kept right side up, she would go like the dickens.

What a glorious sensation it was when we got the sail set, to feel her lean over to it, to hear the water ripple alongside, and see the trees and rocks go flying by, as though we were riding behind a team of fast horses. Only the motion was so much smoother and pleasanter. There was no rumbling over a rough road; no dust; no unpleasantness of any kind. We took off our hats, and sat on

the weather gunwale, and let the breeze blow through our hair, and hurrahed, until we were hoarse. People came out and looked at us, for it was the first time any one in that section had seen a sail-boat, or a boat of any kind, for that matter. Our happiness was perfect; we would n't have changed places with any king in the world—unless he had had a bigger and better boat than ours, and we did n't believe anybody had that.

After the novelty had worn off a bit, Uncle Joe began to teach us how to do it. We were surprised to find how much there was to learn. After he told us so much that we thought we knew it all, he asked Frank if he thought he could sail her.

"Of course!" says Frank, "it's just about the same as drivin' a hoss."

"All right! You watch me a while, and then I'll let you take her. Here sit down here alongside of me, and watch how I do it. Do you see that dead pine-tree over there?"

"Yes."

"Well, now, I'll keep it right over the boat's nose. You watch me and see if I don't. And notice, too, how it's done."

For some time Frank watched, asking questions now and then, until at last he said he



could do it. Uncle Joe gave up the tiller and sheet to him, and she went along all right for nearly a minute. Then he began to swing the tiller, first one way and then the other, while Uncle Joe cautioned him to "steer small." I looked for the dead pine, and it was away round to one side, then it came racing back again—the sail gave a flap—Uncle Joe cried, "Look out, Will!" But before I could look out, or find out what I was to look out for, the sheet caught me under the chin, and, as I had no hold on anything, overboard I went. I could swim all right; but the idea of being away out in the middle of the pond, where, as I supposed, the water was miles deep, scared me. The boat was going away from me like a feather on a gale, and I felt sure that I was lost. I splashed frantically, yelled, swallowed water, and strangled, until I was nearly a goner. I saw that Uncle Joe was once more steering. Presently she turned in a great big circle, like a huge bird preparing to alight. The sail swung across to the other side, and she came rapidly in my direction.

When she came near enough, Uncle Joe shouted to me, "What are you hollerin' about? Can't you swim?"

"Yes," I gasped.

"Well, then, stop your noise, or I'll let you swim ashore."

"I—I—I can't," I yelled in despair, for he was going right by me, ten feet away ; but he only laughed, and kept on.

I saw that my case was desperate, but I began to have a little sense. I couldn't catch the boat, that was certain, and it was equally certain that I could n't swim ashore. I did n't see how they could sail to me, for they had just sailed by me going the other way. But I reflected that they could quit sailing, and get out the oars, and row to me. So I trod water and waited. Presently I saw the boat turn, and to my surprise come sailing right back, though the wind still held in the same quarter as before. "Well," thought I to myself, "if that ain't a miracle, then I never expect to see one, that's all." When they got pretty close, Uncle Joe let go the sheet, and I could see that he was steering so as to pass close to me. I struck out at once to grab her as she went by. "Hold on ! Hold on !" he shouted, "don't you touch this boat till I tell you to !" The boat was now going very slow, hardly moving ; and I was so close that with a couple of strokes I could have laid hold of her ; but Uncle Joe was watching me, and I did n't dare to. When she

got almost by me, and was just about stopped, he said :

“ Now, swim around here to the stern ! ”

I did so, and, being nearly exhausted, he and Frank pulled me in. Then he hauled the sheet aft again, and away we went. After we had sailed along awhile in silence, Uncle Joe said : “ Now, that was a good object lesson for you, boys, and I want to tell you what it teaches. In the first place, whoever sails a boat must always warn his passengers when he’s going to jibe ; that is, let the sail go over to the other side.

“ You didn’t do that, Frank, because you didn’t know yourself that you were going to jibe her. That’s all right ! You’ll learn that after a while. In the next place, passengers must always be on the lookout for a jibe themselves. Because a flaw of wind may jibe her at any moment, when the helmsman has no intention of doing it, especially if you are running before it. Then again, when you are knocked, or fall overboard from a boat, don’t begin to splash and throw your arms about, and holler. You are only wasting your strength, and the crew in the boat will pick you up anyway. Next, you have seen now how necessary it is for you to learn to handle a boat, so you can

put her anywhere you want to ; for instance, right alongside of a person in the water, without running him down. And next, and more important than all the rest, never allow a person in the water to try to climb in over the side. For if, as is sure to be the case, some one goes to his assistance, the chances are, ninety-nine in a hundred, that you'll get capsized. Always make him come in over the stern. Then you have the whole length of the boat for a leverage, and you can hardly tip her up on end. I could have got you the first time I passed you, Will, but I wanted to give you a chance to get quiet, and get your wits about you. Here, now, take hold and let's see you sail her ! Keep her nose as it is, straight for Dave Graham's front door ! ”

For a week or ten days Uncle Joe went out with us every pleasant day, and taught us boat-sailing. He taught us the proper use of the centre-board, showed us how to beat around a point, and to fetch her to her landing. We had several new experiences during those days ; for instance, we ran slap up on a hidden rock. Of course, none of us knew anything about the pond. Frank was sailing her that day, and all at once her bow raised up in the air, there was a grating sound, and over she went on her

beam ends. The mast lay flat along the water, and the stone ballast rolled to the lee side. We, of course, were all thrown out, and had to swim for it, for the rock was only a round knob, about as big as a hogshhead. When we all got together, hanging on the side of the boat, Uncle Joe asked us how we would go to work to right her. We had n't the least idea. In fact, I don't suppose it would have ever occurred to us that such a thing could be done. He laughed at us, and told us we were a fine pair of sailors. "I suppose," said he, "you would hang on here, then, till somebody came out and picked you up? I guess you'd have a nice time waiting. Now, the first thing to do is to get the ballast out of her, before she slips off the rock and sinks. And that reminds me, that I must fix a way to hold the ballast in its place, so it can't shift."

After a whole lot of bother I got the ballast out, and threw it overboard, while they hung onto her to keep her from sliding off the rock. Then we pulled the mast out of her, which was a small job, and after that we soon got her on her bottom again, and pulling her off the rock climbed aboard. We picked up the mast and were just in the act of stepping it, when Uncle Joe asked us if we expected to sail her without

ballast? "It could be done," said he, "in this light breeze, but it ain't safe. Nobody knows what minute a flaw may strike her and over she'd go again, so I don't want you to ever try it."

"Gracious! have we got to pull a white ash breeze all the way home from here?" asked Frank.

"T ain't very likely. Not while we've got a wind to sail with."

"But we ain't got no ballast."

"Well, my gracious, can't you take your oars, and pull ashore at the nearest place, and get ballast? I declare, you're two of the dumbest boys I ever saw."

Shamefacedly we shipped our oars, and in less than fifteen minutes were under sail again.

Walter Baker had been bragging about the schoolhouse that his father was going to buy him a *regular* boat. No such watering-trough affair as Frank Gibbs's; but a clipper from Boston, built by a regular boat-builder. However, the days and weeks passed by, Frank and I had great fun with our boat, taking out parties of boys and girls every fine Saturday, and no rival boat appeared. We never invited any of Walter's crowd, and I don't suppose they would have come if we had.

## CHAPTER X

A COUNTER ATTRACTION — WE ORGANIZE A RIVAL CLUB — THE FIRST GAME — WE DRIVE THE OPPOSITION CLUB FROM THE POND — A BODY BLOW — FROGS — MAGNIFICENT PROSPECTS.

WALTER not being able to get a boat—his father was not that kind of a man—he organized a baseball club; and we found to our dismay that many of the nicest girls pretended to be afraid of the water, and stayed ashore on Saturdays to attend the ball game; also some of the boys, who were not so carried away with boat-sailing as we were, or who had been disappointed and obliged to stay ashore on certain days to make room for others. While we were not exactly suited with the way things were going, yet we didn't mind it so much until winter, when the pond was frozen over, and our boat was no longer an attraction.

As it turned out to be what is called in New England "an open winter," the ball club kept up their practice on the ice; and at all the

winter merrymakings the baseball fellows cut a wide swath.

Our boating parties were forgotten, and we were nobodies.

Frank and I talked over our blighted prospects, and promised ourselves that next summer we would get square by not taking any of those who had slighted us out on the pond. But summer was a long way off, and the prospect of revenge didn't relieve the sense of present snubs.

"Hang it all, Will!" said Frank to me one day, as we were discussing our troubles, "what fools we are! Here we're talking about what we'll do next summer, when now's the time to act. The fellows an' girls are all crazy over baseball, an' darn 'em, we'll give 'em baseball. There ain't a feller in Walt Baker's club but either one of us can lick. An' if we can lick 'em, we can beat 'em playin' ball. They won't let us into their club, so we'll have one of our own. What do you say to that?"

I said that Frank had hit the ball clean out of sight, and we held a confab right off to choose the members of our club. We were careful to choose only such as we felt sure would make it a success—strong, wiry fellows,



who would make good players, and above all, fellows who belonged to our crowd, and would be interested in beating the other club.

The next day, at recess, we notified the boys whom we had chosen, and every one accepted—accepted with enthusiasm. We held an informal meeting in the schoolhouse woodshed, and before the bell rang, calling us back to our studies, the club had been organized, with Frank as president, and me secretary and treasurer. We didn't know what we wanted these officers for, but we had noticed that that was the way all political meetings were organized in the town hall, so we thought we could not be far wrong in following such an example.

For the next week Frank and I were busy studying the rules of the game, in an old book which he found in the garret, and getting difficult points explained by Uncle Joe, whom we firmly believed to be an authority on everything. He made us a splendid bat, while we begged all the old stockings we could from our ma's, ravelled them, and wound a fine hard ball, that would bounce almost like rubber. Billy Dean, whose father was the village shoemaker, took it home, and with scraps of leather and bits of waxed ends, covered it, so that it was

durable, and *nearly* round. We called the club together a couple of times in Mr. Gibbs's barn, and instructed them on the rules. They didn't seem to comprehend them very well, but we assured them that they would understand all right when we actually got to work.

On a fine pleasant Saturday afternoon, we met on the ice for our first practice game. The other club, with an admiring crowd in attendance, were already playing. When they saw us laying out our bases, a committee came over and asked what we were going to do ?

"Play ball," we told them.

"Play ball? What do you fellows know 'bout playin' ball?"

"Maybe we don't know as much as you fellows, that's been playin' all summer; but we can learn."

"You can't learn here," says Walter, "'cause this is our ball ground."

"The deuce you say? How much o' this pond do you fellows own, I sh'd like to know?" says Frank.

"We own enough so 't you can't play here; 'n' besides, we was here first, so we 've got the best right to it."

"Wrong again. It's the last ones that's got the best right. An' now if you don't keep

quiet, we won't let *you* play on *our* ball ground ; will we, fellers ? ”

“ No ! ” shouted all hands, in chorus. “ Let ’s run ’em offen the pond anyway,” says Denny Bayley. The proposition met with immediate favor, and Frank and I had all we could do to restrain our members from charging at once on the opposition. They, finding we were not to be scared away, returned to their own place, and went on with their game.

Everybody wanted to go to bat. It took some time, and not a little forcible language and threats of expulsion, to get them to take their proper stations and wait for their turns at the bat. Oh, boys, what a game that was ! The pitcher, trying to imitate the other team, fired the ball at the batsman as though he were stoning a squirrel. The batsman would make a terrific swipe at it, miss, and the bat would go flying halfway across the pond ; while the catcher would jump to one side to avoid getting hit by the flying ball, and would then sing out to the pitcher : “ Hey ! what ye tryin’ to do ? How do ye s’pose I can ketch that ? Give ’em to me on the bounce ! ”

The upshot of it was that the whole club was kept busy all the afternoon chasing after the bat and ball. Only one run was made,

and that by a little Irish boy, Patsy Gallagher. Patsy hit the ball fair, and sent it sky high. Then, after being reminded by Frank, he started round the bases making a home run—he could have made half a dozen. The ball went straight up, and came down like a plummet right over second base; the baseman saw it coming and dodged, but Frank yelled at him to “ketch it.” Realizing how much depended on him, he took off his fur cap, and holding it at arm’s length in front of him, by the ear laps, turned his head and shut his eyes. Down came the ball, like a stone falling down a well, right between his outstretched arms. It hit the ice at his feet, rebounded higher than his head, and as it fell again, three eager boys fell on top of it. One got it, and as he struggled to his feet, amid a bewildering chorus of “Here!” “Here!” “Give it here!” he threw it wildly away, out on the pond, where it took a good ten minutes to find it.

Walter’s club, after finishing their game, came over to watch us; and I guess they had more fun out of our game than we did ourselves; for they laughed and jeered at all our flukes in a most provoking manner, calling forth many threats of vengeance from our fellows. When they saw the second baseman’s gallant failure,

they set up a howl of delight that was more than we could stand. They said we were *scrubs*; they advised us to *toss* the ball, and "give it to him on the second bounce." Also to provide ourselves with baskets to catch it in, and many more such insulting remarks. At last we charged on them with snowballs and pieces of ice, driving them helter-skelter from the pond. Some we caught, rubbed their faces in the snow, and after kicking and cuffing them plentifully, we let them go, with the warning that we could lick them now, and would yet beat them playing ball.

We practised whenever we got a chance during the winter, and after the boys discovered that catching a hot ball was not a desperately dangerous act, we picked up quite fast, so that when the ground dried out in the spring we contemplated challenging the other club to a match game. Before we got as far as that, they sprung a surprise on us, by coming out suddenly in handsome uniforms. Gray shirts and knee breeches trimmed with black braid, caps, shoes, and long stockings. Very fine they looked with the word "Champion" across their breasts in white letters. This was a body blow for us, and nearly discouraged our club. We had no hopes of ever being able to make such

a fine appearance, and in contrast with them, our poor and often ragged clothes, and bare feet, made us, as Patsy said, "a holy show." Many were the anxious talks that Frank and I had on the subject. Several of our members proposed giving up the club altogether. They said that we only made a laughing-stock of ourselves, which was pretty nearly true, though we could now play ball as well as the self-styled "Champions."

One day as Frank and I were walking slowly past the tavern, talking over our troubles, and kicking up the dust with our bare toes, Mr. Courtney, the tavern-keeper, called us. He was talking with a fine-looking gentleman, one of his summer boarders.

"Do you boys know where you can get any frogs?" said he.

"Frogs?" said Frank, in astonishment.

"Yes, frogs. That 's what I said. You know what frogs are, don't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, do you know where you can get any? That 's twice now."

"What do you want 'em for?"

"This gentleman is a Frenchman. He is stopping here for the summer with his family, and he wants frogs."

"What does he want frogs for?"

"He wants 'em to eat."

We looked at the gentleman, and then at each other, and commenced to laugh. We had never heard of anybody eating frogs. We thought Mr. Courtney was making fun of us, though why he should, never having spoken to us in his life before, we could n't imagine. It seemed to make him angry to have us laugh at him, for he said sharply: "Well, if you don't want to make a lot of money, clear out. I can find plenty of boys to catch frogs, I guess."

When he spoke about making money, we were interested at once, and Frank asked him if he wanted to hire boys to catch frogs.

"Yes," said he, "I'll give—lemme see—ten cents a pound for all the frogs' legs—hind legs, mind you, skinned, that you bring me."

"You will?"

"Yes."

"All we can git?"

"All you can get."

Turning to me, Frank said: "What do you say to that, Will?"

"I say," said I, "that we can find frogs as long as he can find money."

"When do you want 'em, Mr. Courtney?" asked Frank.

"Just as soon as you can get 'em here. I don't care if it's in ten minutes. And bring all you can get every day, or twice a day, if you like, and I'll give you ten cents a pound, honest weight."

Away we ran, pell-mell. We knew where there were frogs, thousands of them, great big green bull-frogs, as big as half-grown kittens.

"We'll take the boat, Will?"

"Yes."

"An' go down to the ma'sh by Holborn's medder."

"Yes, I guess that's as good a place as any, 'n' after we ketch all there is there, we'll go over to Mr. Simonson's. We'll get a lot there. Gosh! Ten cents a pound! How many pounds do you suppose we'll get this afternoon?"

"Oh, I guess about a hundred."

"S'pose we can? That'd be—ten times a hundred is a thousand. A thousand cents—let's see, that's ten dollars. Whew! What'll we do with so much money?"

"Mebbe we had n't better ketch so many at first; 'cause I don't s'pose they could eat 'em all right away. Besides, if he finds we can get plenty, he may cut down the price. Gee whiz!



Will, that's great pay, ain't it? Even if we only get fifty pounds, that'd be five dollars."

"Say, we must n't let any of the other fellows know about this."

"Wal, I guess not; they'd all go froggin', an' the price would drop to a cent a pound the first day. No, sirree, we'll keep this to ourselves."

## CHAPTER XI

WE VERY MUCH OVER-ESTIMATE OUR ABILITIES ——  
FIGHT IN THE BOAT —— “DIVIDE THAT BETWEEN  
YOU” —— WE TRY VARIOUS METHODS —— RIGHT  
AT LAST —— WE MAKE MONEY —— WE EXTEND  
OUR BUSINESS —— POLLYWOGS —— WATER SNAKES

HAVING arrived at the boat landing, and the wind being fair for “Holborn’s ma’sh,” we set our sail, and in a few minutes were among the lily pads. We doused the sail again, and it was agreed that Frank should take an oar and scull, while I leaned over the bow and scooped in the frogs. Somehow they did n’t seem as plentiful as we thought they were, and it was some little time before I saw any at all. At length I did see a big fat fellow sitting on a lily pad, blinking contentedly in the sun.

I told Frank how to steer, and got all ready to grab him. But, before we got within ten feet of him, he leaped into the air, with his legs—the legs that we wanted so badly—stretched at full length behind him, and, ker-

plunk, he dived out of sight. Frank saw the dive, and asked impatiently where the next one was. I looked round a bit, and soon saw another—but we only repeated our failure.

“Thunder!” said Frank, “at this rate, we’ll be lucky if we get twenty-five pounds. Take the other oar an’ hit ’em; we don’t need to ketch ’em alive.”

“All right. But go a little slower; you scare ’em before I can get near enough to hit ’em.”

We crept quietly to within five or six feet of a big fellow, who was sitting with his back to us. I raised the oar high overhead and brought it down with a whack that would have knocked down an ox. Before the oar hit the water I saw him go.

“Did you get him?” asked Frank excitedly.

“No, he got away.”

“Got away? Wal, I swow! They all seem to get away from you. Guess you ain’t much of a hand at ketchin’ frogs.”

“I s’pose you be?”

“If I couldn’t do better’n that, I’d sell out.”

“Wal, here you are, you’re so almighty smart, le’s see you do it.”

I flung my oar angrily down in the boat,

and started aft to take the scull from him. In my haste, I fell over one of the thwarts, rocking the boat violently, and making a great clatter.

"No need of scarin' all the frogs in the pond, jest 'cause you can't ketch 'em yourself," said Frank as he dropped the sculling oar overboard, and started forward. I said nothing—I was too mad. I reached after the oar, and having recovered it, asked him where he wanted to go. "Keep her a little to the right, an' go easy. There's a big one floatin'—Whoa, jest let her float now."

He held the oar about two feet above the water. When he was in just the right place, he gave it a quick *spat* down. At the same time he rocked the boat a little, so that he hit the water about three inches to one side, and of course the frog got away.

"That's a good one," said I, "he'll weigh 'most a pound himself."

"If you hadn't 'a' rocked the boat jest as I struck at him, I'd 'a' got him," he replied angrily.

"Who rocked the boat?"

"You did."

"I did not. You rocked it yourself."

"You're a liar!"

"So are you!"

"You call me a liar?"

"Yes, I do, if you say I rocked the boat, when you done it yourself."

"Gosh darn ye! I'll show ye who's a liar!" and he struck at me with his oar. I was just as mad as he was, and dropping mine, I dodged the blow and grappled with him. For a few minutes we "rastled," pulled hair, and vainly tried to punch each other. Then the boat upset and we both fell overboard. The water was only about two feet deep, so no great harm was done. When we stood up, with our heads covered with weeds and green slime, we looked so comical that we couldn't keep from laughing.

"Ah, what's the use o' fightin'?" said Frank, "we can't ketch no frogs this way. Let's leave the boat here an' go along shore; mebber we can kill 'em with clubs."

"All right," said I, "you go one way an' I'll go t'other, 'n' then we won't interfere with one another, an' we'll see who gets the most. We can come back this way after we've been all around the ma'sh, 'n' get the boat."

He agreed, and we cut stout clubs and started. I had often caught frogs for bait, but I never remembered that they were so hard to

get before. There were plenty of them, but somehow they seemed to know what I was after and jumped before I could get a crack at them. I did manage to get four by the time I got back to the boat. Frank had a little better luck; he caught six. We were both pretty tired and sick of the job. We were all mud, and had been bitten by flies and mosquitoes until our patience was pretty well worn out. We cut the legs off and skinned them. Frank *hefted* them, and said he didn't believe they weighed more than a pound; but I tried them and felt sure they weighed two pounds at least.

"Let's throw the darned things overboard," said Frank, "I'm sick o' this job."

But I would n't agree to that.

"No, sir, we've had too hard work to get 'em; an' besides, there must be some other way to ketch 'em, if we can find it out. I ain't agoin' to give up yet."

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Frank, "we'll ask Uncle Joe. He knows most everything."

"Yes, but if you tell him we can make five or ten dollars a day at it, he won't tell. He'll go 'n' get 'em himself."

"I don't believe we can," said Frank, as he

looked sourly at the little pile of legs, lying on the thwart by his side ; and to tell the truth, I began to doubt it myself.

We found Mr. Courtney sitting on his piazza, smoking a cigar. When we showed him what we had, he said they were all right, but asked us why we didn't get more. We told him we could n't, but would try again next day. He took them in to the barroom, and, calling the cook, gave them to her, with directions what to do with them. Then putting his hand in his pocket, he handed Frank five cents, saying :

"There, divide that between you."

Frank looked at the money, and then at him.

"Well, what's the matter?" said he.

"I thought we was to have ten cents a pound?"

"That's right. But I'm giving you more. I'm paying you at the rate of nearly twenty cents a pound. How much do you suppose they weigh?"

"I thought a little over a pound, but Will said two."

He laughed, told the cook to bring them in again, and he weighed them. They weighed a little less than a quarter of a pound. As we

left the house, our hopes of immense wealth suddenly dashed, Frank looked ruefully at the silver five-cent piece, and remarked: "'Tain't much, is it?"

"No," said I, "it certainly ain't. We'll have to do better 'n that."

Uncle Joe said, that while he had never caught many frogs, he had heard that they would bite at a hook baited with red flannel. We had already decided that either a small net or a spear was what we wanted. So that evening we each made a net, the best way we could, with a barrel hoop, and such pieces of string as we could find. Next day, armed with our fishing gear and nets, we tried our luck again. We made out a little better this time. Once in a while a frog would bite on the flannel; but we came to the conclusion that it was a slow and unreliable method. We wanted some way that would n't depend on the frogs' whims. The nets were not very successful. They were clumsy, hard to handle, forever getting tangled with the grass and stuff in the water, and besides, if we did get a frog in one of them, he would frequently jump out of the net, or the boat, before we could kill him. Altogether, it was very unsatisfactory; though Mr. Courtney gave us ten cents for our catch,



and told us that if we doubled our wages every day we would soon have a mortgage on his house. This encouraged us a good deal, for we remembered the story of the horseshoe nails in the arithmetic. We decided to make a couple of spears and try them. We went over to Mr. Blake's blacksmith shop, and looked among the old pieces of iron outside the door to see if we could find anything to make them of. Mr. Blake was a nice man. He would talk to boys and do little jobs for them, if he was n't too busy. So, when he saw us scratching around in his scrap pile, he asked us what we wanted, and we told him.

"Frog spears?" said he; "why, you can't ketch frogs with spears."

"How can we, then?"

"With a light, in the night. Didn't you never try that?"

"No, sir."

"Well, that's the way. You don't want a bright light, kind of a dull light. I've caught thousands of 'em that way when I was a boy. You get a piece of white paper an' grease it. Lard'll do. Then you wrap that round a lantern, and have a bag with ye, an' roll up yer trouser legs 'n' wade in. Go easy, ye know, so as not to scare 'em; 'n' hold yer lantern ahead of

ye. Bimeby ye 'll see a frog, settin' an' lookin' at the light. Ye move it right up close to him, an' he 'll never budge. Then ye reach down with yer other hand—don't git between him an' the light, ye know—an' pick 'im up, jest as if he was a pertater, an' drop 'im in yer bag. You can ketch 'em every time that way, an' ketch every frog there is in the pond. A good way to save so much wadin' round, if ye 've got plenty of time, is to hang yer lantern on a stake, close to the water, 'n' wait awhile. Every frog that can see the light 'll come to it, and then all you 've got to do is go in an' pick 'em up."

We thanked him for his information, and raced all the way home to get our lanterns fixed, so we could try it that very night. It worked just as he said it would, and we were two happy boys when, after a couple of hours' work, we sat down on the grass, with nearly a half bushel of live frogs each, and went to killing and skinning. Now, indeed, we once more saw visions of wealth rising before us. A good many of them got away, for every time we put our hands in the bags to get another victim, one or more would hop out, and make the longest jumps I ever saw a frog make, through the grass, to water. But after

all, we had a fine pile of nice white legs for Mr. Courtney in the morning. He was so well pleased that he gave us twenty-five cents without weighing them, though he told us he would weigh them if we wanted him to.

After we got more expert at it, we could sometimes make as much as fifty cents in a night, for Mr. Courtney said his guests were so well pleased that he would n't bind us down to the ten-cent contract. We caught other things, too—turtles, water-snakes, and mosquitoes. One night we caught a big turtle, the biggest we had ever seen, as big as the bottom of a butter firkin. We wanted to keep it, though we did n't know what to do with it, so we let him bite the middle of a stick, and as we now had orders to deliver our goods the same night they were caught, we each took one end of the stick on our shoulders and marched up to the tavern with Mr. Snapper hanging on for dear life.

The French gentleman was on the piazza with Mr. Courtney when we came along. Seeing what we had, he was delighted.

He asked if we had brought that for him. We had n't. But if he wanted it, we did n't see how we could refuse. So we told him yes, and he told Mr. Courtney to give us a half a dollar

for it. That made a dollar for our night's work ; we were getting rich fast, and not spending a cent.

After that, turtles—large ones—were added to our list. One night we came upon a corner of the pond that was chockful of “pollywogs.” There were thousands of them, and Frank said, if the Frenchman would only eat them, we could do a good stroke of business.

“Probably he would, if he had 'em,” said I. “We did n't know he'd eat snappin' turtles till we carried one up.”

“That 's so,” says Frank ; “I do n't see why pollywogs should n't be as good as frogs ; they are frogs anyway, only young ones. An' you know people rather have young chickens than ol' hens. Anybody that'll eat such stuff as they do are liable to eat snakes or anything else. Wha'd 'ye say if we carry him up a bagful ? Frogs are gettin' kind o' scarce, an' we'll tell 'im so.”

I thought it was a very good idea ; for, as Frank said, we had thinned out the frogs considerably. So at it we went. It was n't such an easy job as we had anticipated, for, in the first place, the pollywogs were mighty lively ; and then, again, it took such an awful lot of them to make a showing in the bag. But by the

time it was necessary for us to start, we had at least a peck of them.

"I'll bet he'll be glad when he sees what we've got to-night," says Frank.

"I hope so," said I, "we had hard enough time ketchin' 'em. How much do you s'pose he'll give us for 'em?"

"Oh, I dunno. He ought to pay a good price. I don't believe he ever got so many at once before. They're fine ones too. Why, some of 'em's got legs comin' already. An' their tails is droppin' off."

"I know it. If I was used to 'em, I'd like 'em myself. They're as fine a lot of pollywogs as I ever see. How do you s'pose they cook 'em?"

"Jest bile 'em, I guess."

"Do you s'pose he'd like water snakes?"

"Mebbe. We'll try 'em after he eats up all the pollywogs in the pond."

The sun had set, and the moon, big and red, had not yet risen above the tree-tops. We divided our catch in two bags, and, each shouldering one, started for the tavern. The evening was warm and the road dusty, but we did n't mind that. We were elated with our good luck, and as we shuffled along, raising the dust in clouds, Frank walked ahead, and turned continually, to shout congratulations on our

fine prospects. The road ran through a patch of young birches, and there it was quite dark. As we entered this dark place, I felt something cold and damp strike my bare leg a soft tap. Before I had done wondering what it was, I felt it again ; then the truth dawned on me.;

"Hey, Frank," said I, "there must be a hole in my bag ; I b'lieve I'm losin' some o' my pollywogs."

"Oh, lord, I hope not," replied Frank, "we've had too much trouble ketchin' 'em, to lose 'em now, when we're most there."

"Yes, it's too bad, but I guess it's so ; wait a bit."

He stopped, and when I came up with him, he felt my bag over.

"Wal, I sh'd say there was a hole in it," he exclaimed ; "it's a wonder they hain't all got out."

After a short consultation, he gathered the hole together in his hand, and we hurried along towards the moonlight to repair damages.

Suddenly we pitched heels over head, our bags flew in different directions, and a great black and white hog, that had been lying in the middle of the road, ran squealing out into the moonlight.

We got on our feet as quickly as we could, scraped the dust out of our eyes, and gave chase, We knew her well. She belonged to Seth Bige-

low, and was a genuine freelance. She ravaged gardens and cornfields for miles around, and was herself lawful game for boys and dogs. She was wonderfully cunning; instead of keeping in the moonlit road, she dived into the tangle of blackberry bushes by the fence, defying their thorns with her tough hide, and was lost to sight.

"Wal, by gracious," said Frank angrily, "I'd give half a dollar for that ol' sow's hide. I'll bet all our pollywogs have got away, an' this day's work has gone for nothin'."

It was not quite so bad as that, though it was bad enough. Frank's bag had become twisted in falling, so that but few of his tadpoles had escaped, but mine, being old and thin, had burst wide open. The moon shone through a gap in the trees, on the unfortunate pollywogs floundering in the dust. They looked, as Frank said, as if they had gray flannel suits on, and they were nearly dead.

"Guess they're a dead loss, Will," remarked Frank, as he gazed ruefully at the faintly wriggling gray balls.

"Oh, I don't know," I replied, "there's nothin' much the matter with 'em, only a little dirt; that's easy washed off."

"That's so," said he, "le's get at it."

We dumped what remained in my bag into his, and tied up the hole in mine. We gathered up those that were spilled, put them in my bag and started for the brook, an eighth of a mile ahead.

When we arrived at the bridge, Frank set his bag in the ditch, laying a small stone on it to keep it closed, while we washed the others.

It was quite a job ; occupying us an hour or more. When we thought they would do, we returned up the bank, just in time to see that old black and white hog crunching down the last of those we had left in the ditch.

That was the last straw. We fired a futile volley of stones at the veteran, threw our remaining pollywogs, bag and all, into the brook, and went home, wet, dirty, tired, and thoroughly disgusted.

Next morning we called on Mr. Courtney and apologized for our failure of the previous day. When we told our tale of woe, he laughed at us.

"You boys were luckier than you deserved," said he. "What do you suppose Mr. Gerard would have done, if you had brought those pollywogs here ? He would have tanned your hides for you."

So we caught no more pollywogs for him.



## CHAPTER XII

A CHALLENGE——AN INSULT——A GRAND SCHEME  
——GREAT ENTHUSIASM——PROFOUND SECRECY  
——BOUND APPRENTICE——I REBUKE MY EM-  
PLOYER——THE CIRCUS.

ALL this time the feeling of rivalry between the ball clubs was getting hotter and hotter. We had no great following among the boys and girls, for the natty uniforms of Walter's "Champions" proved too strong an attraction for us to overcome. But we practised almost daily, and believed ourselves at least the equals of the other fellows. This belief led to many jibes and jeers, and much mutual bragging, whenever the two clubs or any of their members met. Finally, at one of our regular meetings, in Mr. Gibbs's barn, the subject was discussed with some heat ; and it was agreed that, in order to set the question at rest forever, we would challenge them to a match game. Frank and I were appointed a committee to carry the matter through, and, in order that it might be done in a properly dignified manner,

we sought the advice of Uncle Joe. The result of this conference was, that the following *defi* was drawn up, and neatly written on a sheet of foolscap :

“ OAKVILLE, MASS., *June 3d*, 18—.

“To the President and Members of ‘The Champion B. B. Club.’

“ GENTLEMEN :

“ The question of the superior abilities of the two ball clubs in this place being somewhat in doubt, we, ‘ The Oakville Trumps,’ hereby challenge you to a match game, to decide the matter. Time and place to be left entirely with you.

“ Hoping to receive a favorable answer,

“ We remain,

“ Yours ry.,

“ ‘ THE OAKVILLE TRUMPS,’

“ FRANK GIBBS, *Pres.*”

This challenge was submitted to the club, and unanimously approved. And, amid much noisy cheering, Frank was delegated to deliver it into the hands of Walter Baker, the next day at school.

When Walter read it he laughed in Frank’s face, but said he would have an answer for

him when school let out. He called a meeting of his club, in the grove at the back of the schoolhouse, during the dinner hour ; and we could hear them, laughing and shouting, for some time. When school let out, he handed Frank the following answer :

“OAKVILLE, MASS., *June 4th*, 18—.

“To the President and Members of ‘The Oakville *Scrubs*.’

“GENTLEMEN (?) :

“‘The Champions,’ being the only genuine *uniformed* club in town, recognize no other. We cannot play with ‘The Scrubs.’

“Yours, etc.,

“‘THE CHAMPIONS,’

“WALTER BAKER, *Pres.*”

There was a howl when this answer to our polite note was read at the next meeting. “Scrubs, are we? The trouble with them fellers is, that they dassen’t play with us.” “No, they’re afraid we’d scrub ’em.” “That’s so.” “If they won’t play with us, le’s lick ’em, an’ tear their uniforms that they’re so mighty proud of.” “Hooray! That’s the ticket.” “Mr. President, I move we lick ’em the next time we ketch ’em with their uniforms on.”

Excitement was running high. Frank and I held a hurried consultation. He made a proposition to me that startled me at first, but to which I quickly agreed. It was nothing less than to devote our earnings to a fund to uniform the club. We had nearly five dollars, and it would make a good starter. As soon as he could be heard, he said :

"Look here, boys, I've got a better plan than that. We could lick 'em easy enough, we've done it before—" "Bet yer life we can, an' we will too," says Rodney Blake. "No, we won't," says Frank, "we'll do more'n that to 'em. They say they're the only *uniformed* club in town. That's jest a way they have of crawlin' out of it, 'cause they're a-scairt to play us." "Right you are." "That's so." "Now you're talkin'." "Well, I'll tell ye what we'll do. We'll get better uniforms 'n they've got; an' then they'll have ter play or quit."

This proposition was received in profound silence. At length Jimmy Wells spoke up: "Their uniforms cost two dollars apiece; where we goin' to get so much money?"

"I'll tell ye where we'll get it. Will Kimball an' I've made four dollars 'n' sixty-seven cents ketchin' frogs for Mr. Courtney's French boarder; we'll put that in as a starter.

Every one of you can earn somethin'. There's room for a couple more to ketch frogs. An' now that the summer boarders are beginnin' to get here, you can sell all the fish you can ketch, an' all the berries you can pick ; besides makin' ten cents once in a while doin' chores for the city people. There's nine of us, an' if every one helps all he can, an' turns in all he gets, we'll have better uniforms 'n they've got before fall."

These remarks were received with intense enthusiasm.

"By gosh, yer right we kin, Frank. Down in our pasture I'll bet I kin pick a bushel o' strawb'ries," said one.

"Yes, an' I know where the rosberries are thicker 'n blackbirds," said another.

"Pa said I might have the cherries on the big tree behind the barn this year, an' I'll pick every onè of 'em and turn the money in," said I. While we were all telling what we could do in aid of the fund, Mrs. Gibbs came to the door and called Frank out. He soon came back smiling. "More good luck, boys," said he ; "one of the ladies has been here, an' engaged me to take her an' her children out sailin' next Saturday, if it's fine; an' she's goin' to give me a dollar for it."

"Hooray !"

"Hurroo !"

"Wow !"

"Who'll be 'the only uniformed club in town' pretty soon at this rate ?"

"We'll have three-dollar uniforms."

"That's what we will. None o' yer cheap stuff for us."

"Them uniforms o' theirs do look kinder cheap, don't they ?"

"Course they do. 'Cause they *are* cheap. Wait till they see us. Won't we make 'em sick ?"

Frank again called the meeting to order, and told us that in order to give the "Champions," and everybody else, a thorough surprise party, we must all agree to keep the matter profoundly secret. This proposition was accepted at once, but in order to make it more binding, every boy took a solemn oath, on the bat, not to reveal to anybody the fact that we had any money, or were thinking of getting uniforms. After taking the oath each one kissed the bat, and was warned that if he gave the secret away in any manner, to any person, he would be expelled from the "Trumps," lose his share of the fund, and never be reinstated. I was elected treasurer. After we adjourned, Rod-

ney Blake sidled up to me and slipped two cents into my hand, that he had been saving for the Fourth of July.

The members worked like beavers all summer, and at every meeting of the club each one turned in all he had earned since the previous meeting. I reported the amount on hand, and the prospect of getting our uniforms at an early day was good. As soon as I accumulated a dollar, I took the first opportunity of going to the next village—three miles away—and getting a bill for it. By and by I had the pleasure of trading five ones for a five.

When I reported that fact, showed the bill, and let it pass from hand to hand, to be felt of, looked at, and admired, we celebrated the event with a feast of crackers and brown sugar.

The summer wore on. We were progressing finely. At last examination day arrived. Frank and I graduated with our class, and our schooldays were over. Mr. Wakeman had a long talk with me shortly afterward, and advised me to learn a trade. He said that farming was a hard life, especially for a poor boy, who could expect nothing better than to "hire out" all his life. When he asked me what trade I should prefer, I was at a loss to choose, never having given the subject a thought. He

told me to take all the time I wanted, as it was important that I should not choose hastily.

Shortly after this conversation I went with a lot of our fellows to a barn-raising; and then and there I determined to be a carpenter.

I informed the Deacon of my decision, and he approved it at once; saying that it was a very good trade. We found, however, that it was impossible to obtain an apprenticeship, as, in such a small place, there was not much carpenter work to do. The Deacon then suggested that I try to obtain a place in Mr. Baker's furniture factory, as being the next best thing. I was well pleased with the idea. Mr. Baker usually had three or four apprentices, and, though he was a hard master, he had the name of turning out first-class mechanics. But when he was approached on the subject, he was not at all enthusiastic. He said that I had always been a mischievous, bad boy, and would lead his other apprentices astray. The good Deacon labored with him in my behalf, and he finally agreed, with many hums and has, to give me a chance. I was delighted; for I thought it must be very pleasant to work in the nice clean factory, and learn to make the handsome things that I had seen come from there.



I was disappointed, though, when I found I was not to go to work at the bench at once, but was kept turning the grindstone until I thought my back would break, passing lumber, heating glue-pots, sweeping up the shop, etc. After about a month of this "circular work," as they called turning the grindstone, there was a vacancy in the office, caused by one of the clerks leaving, and I, being fresh from school, a neat penman, and quick at figures, was sent to take his place. I did n't like it a bit. I had had figuring enough in school; and besides, I could n't see how I was to learn cabinet-making in the office. But Mr. Baker was not a man for an apprentice to argue with, so I did as I was told.

Walter used to be about the factory a good deal; but now that I was his father's apprentice, he seemed to despise me entirely; never taking the least notice of me, though he talked and joked with everybody else about the place, even the other apprentices.

There were four of us, I being the youngest. We lived with our employer,—all sleeping in the attic, and eating at the table with the family. On Sundays we were marched to church in a body, and after the service was over, marched back again to a cold dinner—for the old

man was too pious to allow any unnecessary work to be done on the Sabbath. We were then obliged to stay in the house, and read "good books" until bedtime — eight o'clock.

As we worked "from six to six" during the week, it may easily be imagined that I did n't have much fun. For the fact that I was detailed to do office work did not save me from such drudgery as would have fallen to my lot otherwise, including wiping the dishes, carrying wood and water to the house, and helping about the barn and garden.

The old man was too severe and dignified to use the least familiarity in his intercourse with his apprentices. He was too pious to swear at us, but he occasionally relieved his overwrought mind by glaring at us from under his shaggy brows, and calling us "Dumbscoundrels." He had a stereotyped prayer which he prayed every morning—I could repeat it yet, word for word. He always knelt with the back of his chair facing us. We were ranged along one side of the big kitchen, that served as the family dining-room. I, who sat directly facing him, had frequently noticed that as he droned out his dismal appeal to the throne of grace, he kept one eye open and roving along our front,

in search of any graceless scamp who might be slighting his devotions.

One morning Harry Spencer had told me an exceedingly funny story while we were feeding the cattle. When we came in to prayers, I had not yet recovered from laughing, but was inwardly giggling as I took my seat.

When the old man was about half through his prayer, I, unwisely, glanced at Harry. The spirit of mischief sparkling in his eye, the remembrance of the story he had told me, and my own predisposition to laugh were too much for me. Grabbing my nose and mouth in both hands, I snickered aloud. The prayer ceased instantly. Glancing in guilty alarm, between the slats in the back of the old man's chair, I saw that fiery eye fixed upon me in stern wrath :

"What are ye larfin' at, ye dumb scoundrel?"

The sudden transition from piety to profanity—for it was profanity—shocked me. I got up, took my cap, and started for the door.

"Come back here!" said he. "Where are ye goin'?"

"Mr. Baker," said I, "I have always been used to family prayer. Deacon Wakeman

always had it. But he never knocked off in the middle of it to swear at us, and I won't stand it."

He said no more, and I marched out, feeling that I had done a very grand thing indeed. He never said anything to me about it, and I never again attended family prayer. But I was taken out of the office, and sent to the yard, to pile lumber in the blazing sun.

I was the only member of our club who was "bound out." All the others were farmers' sons and stayed at home. In deference to my unfortunate position, the boys generously declined to play, except in the evenings when I could be with them. As we were all at work now our fund did not grow very fast. Frank was the principal contributor. He had a chance occasionally to earn a little money with his boat.

Along towards fall, the barns and fences were covered with wonderful posters announcing, that "Van Amburgh's Circus" was coming to town. It was the first time that our village had been honored by a visit from any such "Grand Aggregation," and everybody was talking circus. Of course, we boys were greatly excited, for not one of us had ever seen anything of the kind. The only performances of which we had any knowlege were the

exercises at school, "Speakin' pieces," "Dialogues," etc., and sometimes in the winter a "Lyceum," or debating society. So the advent of a circus, accompanied by a menagerie of the wonderful wild animals of which we had read, but which we never expected to see, set us nearly crazy. Many a silent regret was indulged for the few pennies, which we had foolishly spent for candy, in the past, and which, if hoarded, would now have furnished the "open sesame" to this great collection of wonders. As the day drew near, excitement reached the fever point. At last the thought that had been in the minds of every one of us for days was spoken. And we agreed, without a dissenting vote, to raid our uniform fund, and go to the circus in a body. The treasurer reported sixteen dollars and a half on hand. We voted to set aside four dollars and a half—fifty cents per head—for the circus. That would leave twelve dollars—a very respectable sum—still in the treasury.

The admission fee was fifteen cents, so we would have thirty-five cents apiece to spend—more money than any of us had ever spent at once in our lives. Visions of unlimited peanuts and red lemonade haunted our waking and sleeping moments. We eagerly swallowed all

the wonderful tales we heard, from people who had seen such things, and added our own conjectures to their statements, to make them more marvellous still. It was agreed, after a heated argument and much dissension, that, by virtue of my office as treasurer, I should act as disbursing agent on the eventful day. Instead of each taking his fifty cents, and going on his own hook, we would travel in a body and I should foot the bills. I was very proud of the honor. And to the anxious inquiries of some of the timid ones, as to whether Mr. Baker would let me go, I told them they need have no fears. I'd be there.

## CHAPTER XIII

WE MARVEL AT AND ENJOY THE WONDERS OF THE CIRCUS — A THUNDERCLAP FROM A CLEAR SKY — ACCUSED OF THEFT — WALTER'S WORD SENDS ME TO THE LOCKUP — THE DEACON WASHES HIS HANDS OF ME — MRS. WAKEMAN IS TRUE BLUE — I AM UNIVERSALLY DECLARED TO BE A BAD BOY.

WHEN the eventful day arrived, Mr. Baker generously allowed the men in the factory to lose half a day ; and he took his own family to the *menagerie*, to see the animals. We boys were ordered to straighten up several piles of lumber in the yard. We were given work enough to keep us going for three days. Before the dust had settled behind my employer's carryall, I was in the attic bedroom climbing into my best clothes. Then away like a shot to meet the club in Mr. Gibbs's barn. There was to be a street parade, and this we were bound to see. I shall never forget my disappointment when I discovered that the elephant was a great deal smaller than the meeting-

house. But there were so many strange and wonderful things to see, that I soon got over it. With delighted shouts, we pointed out to each other the lion, tiger, giraffe, hyena, and other animals, which looked exactly like the pictures on the bills ; only, somehow they were smaller than we had expected them to be.

My pleasure was dashed, momentarily, by seeing Mr. Baker looking at me from his carriage as he passed ; but even that had only a passing effect. Having reviewed the street parade, we hurried to the ticket-wagon. Just as I passed up a five-dollar bill, and called for nine half tickets, I saw Walter Baker staring at me, in open-mouthed wonder. Having received my tickets and change, we marched boldly into the big tent, and the wonders of Aladdin's cave were as nothing to what burst on our astonished gaze. We could never have believed that such splendors existed outside the story books. Whichever way we turned, there were flags and streamers of all colors, and, while we stood agape with wonder, a magnificent knight, clad in golden armor, and accompanied by the queen of the fairies, passed close to us, and asked a man in overalls who was carrying two pails of water for a chew of tobacco. We passed on, until we came to the



stands where the fruits and lemonade were on sale. We indulged in repeated doses of that mysterious beverage, and, as I paid the shot, I once more encountered the wondering gaze of Walter Baker.

The recollections of that glorious day will stay with me while memory lasts. We stared in wonder and fear at the huge African lion. He looked like a great good-natured cat; but a man told us that they only fed him once a week, and then he ate a whole ox. He said he guessed they would n't have to feed him this week, as he had eaten two boys at the last place where they stopped; which he assured us was not an unusual occurrence at all, and often happened to boys who stole money to go to the circus with. Although this did n't apply to us, we stood a little further back from the cage, and when the noble king of beasts suddenly sat up, we broke and fled in mortal terror. After that we were careful not to get too near the tigers, leopards, and hyenas.

Pete Hutchins strayed off by himself, but presently he came rushing back breathless, to tell us he had found a cage of monkeys. We adjourned at once to the monkey cage, and "blew in" a quarter on peanuts. Each member was bound to have a handful, to feed to

the comical little fellows. And when a great ape reached through the bars and snatched them right out of Rodney's hand, we all roared to see him jump and yell in fear. After that we made them all take them from our hands, and were admired for our bravery by the rest of the crowd.

Presently there was a grand blare of trumpets and rattle of drums. We piled helter-skelter over one another, and everybody else, to the great central ring, where a most gorgeous procession of kings, queens, clowns, fairies, knights in splendid armor, and many others that we did n't know the names of, was slowly riding round on the most beautiful horses. We gave vent to our admiration, in ecstatic "Ah's!" and "Oh's!" as they passed in dazzling review before us. But what shall I say of the wonderful feats of horsemanship that we saw that day? Not only men, but women, stood on the bare backs of the horses, as they galloped furiously round the ring. They even jumped through hoops—alighting again safely. Frank had always prided himself on his ability to ride any colt on the farm; but when I asked him what he thought of that, he simply said: "That stumps me!" And so it did, all of us.

When the trick mule came on—the first

animal of the kind we had ever seen—and, after taking a little girl gently around the ring on his back, the ring-master offered five dollars to any man or boy who would ride him around again, we could n't get into the ring quick enough—fearing some one else would get the money.

Frank was the lucky one to get first chance. "Now, remember," said the man, "if you fall off before you get all the way round, you don't get the money."

"Fall off? Ho!" said Frank contemptuously "I won't fall off. Git app!"

He gave the mule a slap on his rump, and quicker than a flash that mule's whole rear end went straight up in the air. Frank rolled ingloriously in the sawdust. Shrieks of laughter went up from the audience, and poor Frank scrambled to his feet, with tears of shame and rage. He rushed up to the mule, and kicked him savagely three or four times in the ribs, before the ring-master caught him by the ear, and put him out of the ring.

"Let me try, Mister?" "Me next, Mister?" "Ah, Mister! let me try him? I asked first," we all shouted, anxious to secure the money, and each believing that the mule could n't throw *him*. But he did. One after another

we picked ourselves up out of the sawdust, and wondered how it was done.

After the ring performance was over, we found that we had just money enough left to go to a side-show, where a magician was performing; so in we went. After taking live rabbits, pigeons, tin cans, and about five bushels of feathers out of a plug hat he asked if two boys would come up on the stage, and help him. "The Oakville Trumps" again covered themselves with glory, by responding as one man, in a wild scramble for the stage. The professor selected Rod Wells and Frank, excusing and thanking the rest of us, with a courtly grace that covered us with confusion.

"Young man," said he to Frank, "you should eat your dinner at home, and not bring these things here with you." He then put his hand inside Frank's coat and pulled out a whole ham. Turning him quickly round, he reached up under his coat behind and brought out a loaf of bread; from his various pockets he produced enough boiled eggs and doughnuts to feed a large family. Telling him to kick, a sausage made its appearance, and grabbing hold of it, the professor pulled out of his trousers leg, and piled on the table in front of him, a pile of sausage that would have filled a milk

pail. "Why," said he, "you must be an awful big eater. Or was you getting ready to run away from home and join the circus? We'd like to get such recruits as you, for sometimes we don't have any too much to eat. But seems to me this is pretty dry provender; I suppose your partner carries the drinkables, hey?"

While Frank stood with his mouth open, gazing in awe at the Professor, that gentleman stepped quickly to Rodney's side, and, reaching inside his coat in the same manner, he pulled out a flat quart bottle, which he held up, so that everybody could see that it said on it in big letters, "RUM."

The Professor shook his head sadly. "My," said he, "but this is a tough town." A man rose up in the back of the tent, whom we all recognized as an old horse-trader named Ike Hicks. "That's what I like ter see, by gum," said he. "There's people in this place that make the dumdest tow-row if a man happens ter take a little licker once in a while, and now ye can see how they bring up their own young ones. That's Nate Wells's boy, one of the rankest teetotallers we've got; an' jest look at what he's carryin' round with him—a quart flask. I never carried more'n a pint, not even to a fair." The people roared, and Frank and

Rodney were so ashamed that they left the stage in a hurry. As that was the end of the show we all went home, talking of the wonders we had seen at the circus.

I was so full of my day's pleasure that I paid little heed to the predictions of the other apprentices, that I would "ketch it" from the old man for leaving my work. Nothing was said at the tea-table ; and the next morning, after doing my chores, I went, as usual, to the lumber pile.

About ten o'clock Walter came out and told me his father wanted to see me over at the house—just across the road. I followed him over, quaking inwardly, though I tried to look as if there was nothing on my mind. Walter opened the parlor door. I passed in and he followed, closing the door after him. Mr. Baker sat at his desk, with his back to us, busily writing.

"Here he is, father," said Walter. The old man turned, shoved his spectacles up over the top of his head, and regarded me sternly for nearly a minute.

"You was to the menagerie yesterday?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did n't I leave you here with orders to pile that lumber?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wal, what do you mean by goin' off an' leavin' your work like that?"

"I wanted to see the circus; I never saw one before."

"How much money did you have?"

"I had enough."

"Yes, I guess you did. Where did you get it?"

I did n't know just what to say to that, because we had all taken a solemn oath not to say anything about our fund. So I made no answer. After waiting a sufficient time, he repeated the question. A bright thought occurring to me, I answered:

"I earned it."

"Earned it, hey? Boy, you'll fetch up in state's prison just as sure as this world. I know where you got that money; you stole it right out o' this here drawer in my desk, an' I'm a-goin' to have ye sent to jail or the reform school."

"I did not," said I hotly, "that was my own money. I never stole a cent from you nor nobody else. I'm no thief." And then I began to cry, for Mr. Baker was a very big man in Oakville, and I believed he could send me to jail if he wanted to.

"Don't lie to me, boy," said he, "I had fifteen dollars in this drawer, a ten-dollar bill an' a five. It's gone now, an' Walter saw you hand a five-dollar bill to the ticket man. Now, if you did n't steal that out o' my drawer, where did you get it? That's what I want to know. You're a bad boy, an' allus have been. I told Deacon Wakeman so when he asked me to take ye. I did n't want to take ye, an' wish now I had n't. You'd spile every boy I got if I kep' ye here."

I was crying bitterly now, for, though I had no doubt that the club members would come forward and disprove the charge of theft against me, I knew that Mr. Baker was down on me, and would n't have me any longer in his employ. I felt discouraged to hear him say that I was such a bad boy.

Deacon Wakeman had said the same thing, and yet I did n't see what I had ever done to be called *bad*. One thing I was sure of. If I was a bad boy, there was no chance of my ever being a good one; for I did n't know what there was about me that needed changing.

He locked me in a spare bedroom, and after dinner he sent Walter for Obed Kelly, the constable. When the officer of the law arrived, Mr. Baker brought him to my room, and said :



"There, constable, there's yer prisoner; I want ye to lock him up, till such time as I can see the Square an' get a warrant. 'Tain't safe to leave him about the place. He's stole fifteen dollars from me a 'ready, an' I don't feel as if I can afford to lose any more."

"I don't blame ye," said the constable, "he's a bad one. I know him of old. A reg'lar gallus bird. I'll take him along, an' keep him for ye, till ye want him."

He grasped me roughly by the collar, saying: "Come along now, an' don't ye try none o' yer tricks on me, or it'll be the wuss for ye." As I was a considerably bigger boy now than when he took me up before, he took the precaution of handcuffing me to the arm of the buggy seat. Once more I was driven through the village street, a prisoner.

Our road took us by my home, and I sincerely hoped to pass it without being seen by either the Deacon or Mrs. Wakeman. No such luck was in store for me, however. The good old lady, with the curiosity born of a lifetime on the farm, seldom allowed a vehicle of any description to pass the house without carefully scrutinizing its occupants, and speculating on the nature of the business which caused them to be out.

Seeing the town constable approaching, with another person in his buggy, her curiosity was fired to such an extent, that, as I kept my face averted in the hope of avoiding recognition, she came out to the road and asked after the health of his "folks." Seeing the impossibility of concealing my identity, I put a bold face on the matter, and, turning towards her said: "How de do, ma?"

She threw up her hands in astonishment, and exclaimed: "For the land's sake, Will Kimball, what have you been a-doin' now?"

"Nothin'," said I.

"No," said Obed, "nothin'; only stealin' fifteen dollars from Mr. Baker, Mis' Wakeman."

"Oh, William, how could you do such a thing? Wait a minute, Obed, till I call the Deacon; he's right out here in the garden." Away she flew, while my heart went down into my boots, as I heard her calling: "Pa, pa, here's Obed Kelly, an' he's got our Will took up agin, for stealin' fifteen dollars from Mr. Baker."

I asked Obed if he did n't think we had better drive on. He paid no attention to me, but sat there as stolidly as fate. When the Deacon slowly approached from behind the house, he gave me a look that froze my blood.

"Good day, Obed!" said he.

"Good day, Deacon, looks as if we might have rain 'fore long."

"Yes. What did you say that boy'd been up to now?"

"Stealin'. He stole fifteen dollars from Mr. Baker, an' took a whole mess o' boys to the circus, an' spent every cent of it. Walter seen him changin' the bills."

"I did n't," said I indignantly. "I never stole a cent from anybody, I—"

"Don't lie about it, William," said the Deacon severely, "it's bad enough in all conscience without that. I know you will lie; you lied to me years ago, when you was only a little boy, an' I hain't much surprised that now you're bigger you've taken to stealin'. It's jest about what I expected. The good Lord knows, I done my duty by ye, so I don't feel I'm to blame for your evil ways; but now I wash my hands of ye; you can go your own way, an' if you don't fetch up on the gallus 'fore you're done, I'm much mistaken."

He turned from the wagon and walked back to the house, the impersonation of uncompromising virtue.

Mrs. Wakeman had stood, quietly crying and wiping her eyes on the corner of her apron;

but now that the Deacon was out of earshot, she looked up through her tears, and said : "Oh dear ! why did you do it, Willie ? Why did you ? If you 'd 'a' come to me, I 'd 'a' given you money to go with, ruther 'n to have had you steal it. Let 'im go, Obed, can't ye ? Jest this once ; I know he did n't mean to."

"No, marm, I carn't," said Obed severely, "an' I sh'd think you 'd know better, Mis' Wake-man than to tamper with an officer of the law while in the performance of his duty."

"Will Kimball," said she, "you jump right out o' that wagon this minute, an' run an' hide yourself in the barn."

"I can't, ma," said I, pulling up the sleeve of my coat, and showing the handcuff underneath.

"Oh, shame ! Shame on you, Obed Kelly. To chain up a child like that. How 'd you like to see one o' your own children—"

"Git app !" shouted Obed, giving his old horse a vicious cut with the alder stick that he used for a whip ; and, with a leap forward that nearly threw me over the back of the seat, he started on a shambling gallop, leaving the poor old soul crying her kindly heart out in the road behind us.

My own eyes were wet, and turning to me,

Obed said : " I sh'd think you'd cry. You'd ought to be ashamed of yourself—"

" Oh, you shut up, an' mind your own darned business," said I. I could n't stand a lecture from *him*.

" Wal, by gum ! if you hain't the wust ! You take my word for it, young man, you're on the straight an' narrer road that leads to the gallus."

" Don't care if I be," said I, and we both relapsed into silence. We had jogged along half or three quarters of a mile, when I heard the sound of a trotting horse behind us. Looking back, I saw Frank Gibbs coming up on one of his father's colts. When he got within hailing distance, I called to him, and he was soon alongside.

" Why, what's the matter, Will ?" said he, " Where ye goin' with Obed ?"

" To jail."

" What fer ?"

" Fer stealin' the money from Mr. Baker, that we spent at the circus yisterday."

" Why, you did n't steal it. Mr. Baker never had it. That was our own money."

" Don't make any difference ; Mr. Baker says I stole it from him, an' I'm goin' to jail, and mebbe to the gallus for it."

"Say!" says Obed, "I don't want you talkin' to my prisoner. Git out!"

Frank dropped behind the wagon, and followed us, until he came to his own home. Then, calling out that he was going to tell his pa all about it, he left us. After this we drove along in dismal silence to Obed's home. The village had no lockup. The few people who were arrested, for such petty offences as occur in a country place, were cared for by the constable, until the Squire heard their cases. As Obed considered me a more than usually desperate character, instead of locking me in one of his bedrooms, as was his custom, he put me in the "corn barn." This was a small building about fifteen feet square, standing on stone posts, to keep the rats out, and built of slats, with spaces between, like a bird cage. It was larger at the top than at the bottom, and had wide projecting eaves.

With an eye to maintaining the traditions of his office, he gave me a pail of water and a great hunk of corn bread. This was my supper. Sleeping accommodation, I had none. The night was rather cool, and in my airy domicile, chilly. I kept moving to keep warm, and as I paced my narrow quarters, I reflected on my position. I knew, of course, that the

charge of theft could not be sustained ; but I was satisfied that, for all that, Mr. Baker would not again take me into his employ. Somehow, everybody accused me of being a bad boy ; but when I looked back over my life, I could not see that I had ever done anything to deserve it. The more I thought of it, the more heartsick and discouraged I became. It seemed as if all Oakville was leagued against me, and bound to down me. I had been reading the adventures of Kit Carson, and the life of the bold scout had fired my blood. I determined that when I got out of limbo, I would shake the inhospitable dust of Oakville from my feet, and go West. Mrs. Wakeman had been a mother to me, and I dearly loved her ; but the Deacon had accused me of lying, that very day, although I had religiously kept the promise I made, when he whipped me for lying about the bags, and had been strictly truthful ever since.

## CHAPTER XIV

FRANK TO THE RESCUE — HE PROVES HIMSELF TRUE  
BLUE — HO FOR "CALIFORNY" — ROBBED—  
"ONE MEAL" — A "WEARY WRAGGLES."

WHILE I was revolving these thoughts in my mind, I heard some one ask in a loud whisper :

"Is that you, Will?"

"Yes," said I, "who are you?"

"Sh! Don't speak so loud. It's me. What ye doin' in there?"

I found that "me" was Frank. I told him Obed had put me in the corn barn for safe keeping, and that I was walking about to keep warm.

"Wal, darn him!" said Frank, "who ever heard of such a thing. Can't ye git out?"

"'Tain't likely. Do you s'pose I'd stay in here if I could get out?"

"By gosh! I can git ye out!" He went off, and came back in a few minutes with a fence rail. He handed me a stone, and, putting the end of the rail between a couple of slats, swung back on it. I held the stone until the



rail jammed down on it, and then, giving an extra swing on his end, he burst the slat inward. It did n't take me but a minute to rip it off after that, and I was soon out on the grass with my chum.

"How did you know I was in there, Frank?" I asked.

"I did n't know it. I told pa all about it, an' he said 'twas a darn mean shame. He said if the Deacon was any good, he'd sue ol' Baker, for false imprisonment, an' make 'im sweat for it. So I thought I'd come over an' tell ye, 'cause I knew you'd be lonesome. An' when I was comin' along I seen somethin' movin' in the corn barn, an' I says to myself, 'Gosh! what's that I wonder? a catamount?' I was scared at first, but bimeby, as I watched, I seen it was somebody. So I crep' closer, an' darned if it wa'n't you. Come home 'n' sleep with me to-night, an' to-morrer I'll git pa to go to the Square's, 'n' tell him all about it."

"No, I'm goin' to go West."

"Go West? Where West?"

"Oh, way out West, where the Injuns are. Mebbe I'll go all the way to Californy an' dig gold. I'm sick of Oakville. I don't git no show here. Everybody's down on me."

"Pa ain't down on ye. He says you're worth

half a dozen o' some o' these fellers, an' 'll make your mark yet."

"I will too, Frank. I'll go this very night, an' I won't come back till I'm rich. Rich as ol' Baker, you see if I do."

"Ye ain't goin' to-night, be ye?"

"Yes, to-night. Now."

"Oh, pshaw! Come home 'long o' me, an' git a good night's sleep, an' a hot breakfast, an' some clothes—an' ye ain't got any money?"

"No, I ain't got nothin'."

"Oh, well, you can't go anywheres without money; besides, you know part of our money belongs to you. You want that."

"Yes, there's twelve dollars, an' I s'pose some of it belongs to me; but I can't get it now, 'cause I'd have to change a ten dollar bill to do it."

"Where is it?"

"It's in an old tin box, on top of one of the beams in the Deacon's barn."

"Wal, I'll tell ye what you do. You go an' git it, an' I'll go home an' git the change from Uncle Joe; he'll let me have it, an' I'll meet you at our gate with it. What do you say?"

"All right. I'll do it. An' much obliged to you too."



WILL'S ESCAPE FROM HIS PRISON.

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"Oh, that's all right."

Away we sped in opposite directions. I had about three times as far to go as he had, so I ran nearly all the way. Inside of an hour I was back at Mr. Gibbs's gate, and there stood Frank with a bundle.

"Was I gone long?" I asked, as I came up panting.

"No, I did n't expect you back for half an hour yet. You must have run all the way."

"I did, pretty near. Did Uncle Joe let you have the change?"

"Course; he'd let me have anything, 'specially when I told 'im 't was for you."

"You did n't tell 'im that, did ye?"

"Yes, but I did n't tell 'im you was goin' away. I won't tell that till mornin'."

"That's right. Wal, here's the money. Now if you 'll give me my share, I 'll be off."

"Say, Will, I put up a few things for you in this bundle. You can't start out like that, you know; there's a couple o' pairs o' socks, an' a few other things, an' a bite to eat."

"I'm awfully obliged; but what 'll your folks say 'bout givin' away your things like that?"

"Oh, I'll tell ma in the mornin', an' that'll be all right. She likes you, an' I know she'd rather I'd give 'em to you than to have you go

off without anything. Here's your change in this envelope. I'll jest put it in the bundle, an' then you won't lose it."

"All right, thank you. Well, I must be off, I want to get a good start before daylight."

"I wish I was goin' with you."

"So do I. But you don't need to. You've got a good home, an' a father that'll stick to you, an' not let people call you a thief an' a liar jest whenever they happen to feel like it. Say, Frank, I wish you'd go over to-morrow and tell the Deacon that I did n't steal that money, will you?"

"Course I will."

"An' tell 'im I hain't lied since I promised him not to, that time in the barn. Will you, Frank?"

"You bet your life I will."

"An' tell 'im I hain't agoin' to, neither."

"All right."

"Bid Ma Wakeman good-bye for me. will you?"

"Yes."

"An' Uncle Joe."

"Yes."

"Wal, I guess that's all. So, good-bye, Frank."

"Good-bye, Will, an' good luck."

"Thank you, when I get rich I'll pay you for these things ten times over."

"Oh, that's all right. Which ye goin' to do, be a scout, or dig gold in Californy?"

"I can't tell yet; I'll see which I like best when I get there."

"I sh'd ruther be a gold miner, 'n' get rich; what's the use of bein' a scout?"

"Oh, I dunno, I think I sh'd kind o' like it."

"Wal, whichever you do, come back as soon as you can."

"Yes, I will. Good-bye, Frank."

"Good-bye, Will. Bring me home a nugget."

"I'll bring you a bag full. Good-bye."

"Good-bye."

I turned my back, slammed the gate, and started on my travels. The moon had risen. It was a beautiful night, just cool enough to make brisk walking pleasant. With the exception of the night when Frank and I had the adventure with the skunk, I had never been awake at such a late hour. The stillness and beauty of the night affected me. I felt myself to be a martyr. My road took me past the Deacon's house. It was the only home I had ever known. As I thought of the one kind heart under that roof that would grieve for

me, pray earnestly for my welfare, and remember naught but good of me when, perhaps, others would be wondering if I was hung yet, I swallowed two or three great gulps and drew the back of my hand across my eyes—but it was only for a moment. What right had I, the future world-renowned scout, to indulge in such weak sentiments? I did n't remember that Kit Carson had ever been guilty of anything of the kind. I turned my face from the old homestead, and plodded resolutely on.

Oakville was situated within a few miles of the New York State line, and, as my road was westward, I thought I would improve the opportunity to see the great city. As I trudged along, up hill and down dale, the sweet morning air revived my spirits, and I was soon building air castles. When the sun rose I was in a perfectly strange country; for I had never been but a few miles from home, and the scene interested me. I passed through a large village just at dawn, and noticed that I attracted considerable attention from the few people who were moving about; but as no one spoke to me I kept on, and was soon in the open country again. I began to feel hungry, and looked about for a place to eat the bite that Frank had said was in my bundle. A noisy little brook,



that ran under a wooden bridge, attracted me, as it would furnish drink for my breakfast. So, leaving the road, I followed it around the first turn, and seating myself on a mossy log opened my pack. The first thing that attracted my attention was the envelope containing my "change." I had long ago made the mental calculation that my share of the twelve dollars would be only one dollar and thirty-three cents. So I had no need to change the ten-dollar bill after all. When I opened the envelope, the first thing I found was five one-dollar bills. There was also a note from Frank, which read as follows :

"DEAR WILL :

"I now take my pen in hand to write you these few lines. As you are going away, you will need money more than I shall, so I lend you my share. The rest I borrowed from Uncle Joe. I can pay him any time. I do not suppose we will ever buy any uniforms now that you are gone. The club will probably burst up, as the boys have all got to work and won't have time to play ball.

"Hoping this will find you in good health, as it leaves me at present, I remain,

"Yours respectfully,

"F. GIBBS."

The thoughtful self-sacrifice of my chum made a deep impression on me, as I sat on that old log and munched the bread-and-pork sandwiches which I found in my bundle. "Frank's an almighty good feller," said I to myself; "I don't believe I would have done that." In the bundle were two pairs of neatly darned socks, a couple of clean shirts, a pair of pants, and a pair of shoes. There was a small parcel, done up in a piece of paper, which, when unrolled, proved to contain a clean towel, a comb, a piece of bar-soap, and a spool of thread, with two needles and half a dozen buttons.

Really, Frank's thoughtfulness had provided me with articles of the utmost value to me, yet of which I should never have thought myself. I ate half of my lunch, washing it down with water from the brook, and, replacing the rest in my bundle, peeled off and had a good bath. I found that after sitting, I was rather stiff, and a little foot-sore from my long walk, but the bath remedied that, to a great extent, for I rubbed myself thoroughly. Having dressed, and hung my towel on a low bush to dry, I sat down again on the log, and, leaning my back against a tree, enjoyed the warm sunshine until I fell asleep. It must have been three or four o'clock in the afternoon when I

woke with a start, and looked about me, wondering where I was. I soon remembered, and sought for my bundle, but it was gone. I hunted for some time, but all I could find was the soap and towel, so I was forced at last to recognize the fact that I had been robbed. Fortunately I had put my money in my pocket, so that was safe.

I was sorry now that I had not eaten all the lunch, for I woke up, "hungry as a bear." I mourned, too, for the shoes in the bundle, which were better than those I had on. However, I soon came to the conclusion that there was no use crying for spilled milk, so I started back to the road again. I did not feel as light-hearted as before. There was a sense of depression, due to the fact that I had met with a loss.

I travelled on, wishing, yet dreading, to stop at one of the many houses by the way and ask for something to eat. To be sure I had the money to pay for what I wanted, but, in the first place, I was afraid to show it, fearing I should be arrested as a thief, and then again, I judged that people would think, even if I offered to pay for it, that I really meant to beg. So between shame and fear, I plodded wearily and hungrily on, until at last I came to a large

village, where I saw a sign which read, "Restaurant."

I had not the slightest idea what a restaurant was, but seeing several small tables set out for meals, I walked boldly in, and asked a man who was behind a small counter if he sold meals.

"Yes, my boy, that's what we are here for," said he.

"I'll take one," said I.

"One what?"

"One meal."

He eyed me suspiciously for a moment, then asked: "What will you have, dinner or supper?"

"Ain't dinner over yet?"

"Oh, well, it's a little late for dinner, to be sure, but I can give you a dinner if you want it."

"I don't want you to give it to me, I want to buy it."

"Well, of course. What'll you have? Roast beef, roast pork, corned beef and cabbage, pork and beans, ham and beans, ham and eggs."

"Gosh!" said I, "I don't want all that."

"I guess pork and beans'll be about your style."

"Yes, I guess so. How much will it be?"

"Ten cents."

"Ten cents for a little pork an' beans?"

"Yes, and fifteen with tea or coffee."

"How much with water?"

"The same, ten cents."

"I 'll take water."

"All right, sit down there."

He brought me in a great big plate of cold pork and beans, a couple of slices of bread, a small piece of butter about as big as half a dollar, and a glass of water. I asked him if that was all the butter there was in the house. He said no and brought me another little dab just like it. I made a hearty meal; ate everything there was on the table; and when I paid him, he took out fifteen cents.

"Here," said I, "you told me it would be only ten cents with water."

"You had an extra butter," said he shortly.

"Do you charge five cents for that little mite of butter?"

"Certainly. And it's a good five cents' worth too."

I pocketed my change and walked out. A new sense of the value of things had dawned on me. At this rate my five dollars, which had seemed an inexhaustible supply of wealth, was liable to give out before I got to California.

It was getting towards sundown, and I began to wonder where I should sleep. I did not intend to walk all night again, in fact I already felt tired and sleepy, for the nap on the log had not refreshed me as much as I at first thought it had. As I travelled along the dusty road, fighting down sturdily the wish that I was back on the Deacon's farm, I came in sight of what looked like a deserted barn, out in the middle of a large field. There was no house in sight, so I went over to it. I peered in through the cracks, and saw that it was not a barn, but merely a storehouse for grain and hay. There was a considerable pile of hay in one end of it, and, finding an opening through which I could squeeze, I crawled in, buried myself in the fragrant hay, wished to the Lord I was already in California, and fell sound asleep.

Sometime during the night I was awakened by a loud crash. I sat up quickly in the hay, and looked about me. The moon was shining brightly through the innumerable cracks and knot-holes in the old barn, and I saw a man working at the hole through which I had entered. He deliberately ripped off a board to make the hole big enough for himself, and came in. At first, I guiltily thought it was the farmer after me, but I remembered that

he would hardly come in that way. The man started across the floor in my direction, slowly feeling his way, and mumbling to himself.

Presently his foot went through a hole in the floor, and how he cursed ! I never heard anything like it in my life. I believe my hair stood on end. He cursed the barn, the darkness, himself, the fact that he had no matches, everything, it would seem, that he could think of. I was horror-stricken and filled with dread, as I wondered what he would do to me if he found me there, and knew that I had heard him using such language. I kept as still as a mouse. I judged that he was drunk, by the way he staggered. By and by he found the hay, and sat down within ten feet of me. I hardly dared to breathe. He was eating. He champed, and snorted like a hog. I determined to leave the barn as soon as he got to sleep ; but I must have gone to sleep first.

## CHAPTER XV

AN EXCITING RACE — A GOOD SAMARITAN — A  
SPLENDID BREAKFAST — UNDUE FAMILIARITY  
PROPERLY REBUKED — I REJECT A GOOD OFFER  
— I EMBARK IN A NEW INDUSTRY — MR.  
SIBLEY AND HIS HOGS.

WHEN I awoke, the sun was shining brightly through the cracks. My bedfellow was snoring like a locomotive. Carefully, so as not to make any noise, I crept out of my nest and started for the hole. I took one glance at him. He was big, fat, dirty, and ragged. He lay flat on his back, his arms stretched out and his mouth wide open. At his side lay my bundle.

Without a second thought I grabbed it. It was fastened some way to a leather belt which he wore. I gave a jerk and the knot came loose, but he woke up. His bleary eyes opened slowly ; he looked at me vacantly and said :

“Huh !”

With my heart in my mouth, I fled like a deer. He scrambled clumsily to his feet, and called on me in a thick voice to stop ; cursing



horribly. But I was outside the barn, and seeing an old harrow leaning against it, I stopped long enough to turn it so that it covered the hole, and then I ran for dear life. As I tumbled breathlessly over the fence, I heard him shouting; and looking back saw that he had got out of the barn, and was shaking his fist in my direction. He didn't bother to run after me, so, feeling safe again, I went off down the road on my way to California.

As usual, I had got up hungry, and wondered where my breakfast was coming from. I tramped along for nearly an hour, passing but few houses, and lacking the courage to apply at any of them. At last I came to a neat little red house, standing back from the road. There was a garden on one side, and in the garden was a big fat woman, trying to drive out a calf that was racing about, and creating sad havoc. As I came up, she stopped, took off her calico sun-bonnet, and, while fanning herself with it, said:

"Bub, if you'll help me drive that dratted calf out of this garden, I'll pay ye for 't."

"Oh," said I, "I'll do that for nothing." I jumped over the fence, and between us we soon had his calfship in the orchard, and the bars up.

"There, I thank ye ever so much," said she ;  
"won't you come in an' have a drink of cold  
milk ? I'm a goin' to."

"Yes," said I, "I should like a drink of milk,  
it's so warm an' I'm kinder faint. I ain't had  
no breakfast yet."

"Well, bless your heart, you shall have  
breakfast, an' a good one too, if I do say it  
that had n't ought ter."

We went into a large cool kitchen, the floor  
and table of which were scrubbed until they  
were as white as snow.

"Now you set right down there by the open  
winder an' cool yerself off, while I git you some-  
thin' to eat," said she. She stepped out to a  
spring house, and was back in a minute, with  
a big white pitcher, full to the brim with de-  
licious cool milk on which the golden cream  
had already commenced to rise. As she stirred  
the cream back into it with a great wooden  
spoon, she asked :

"Don't you want to wash you ?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, go right out there to the shed, an'  
you'll find a basin, an' some soap, an' a towel.  
You can use either rain water out o' the barrel  
or draw a bucket from the well. The rain  
water's the softest, but I generally use the

well water this warm weather, 'cause it's so nice an' cool."

When I returned, I found the milk pitcher flanked by a big dish of brown crisp doughnuts, while the good lady had started a fire, and the savory odors of frying bacon greeted my nostrils.

"There, you set down there now, an' jest take a bite to stay your stomach, till I git some breakfast ready for ye. Don't eat so many o' them doughnuts, now, as to spoil your appetite for breakfast. You don't live round here, do ye?"

"No, ma'am."

"Where do you come from? If I may be so bold."

"I'm from Oakville."

"Oakville? Land sakes, but you're a good ways from home. Where ye goin'?"

"To Californy."

"Wh-a-a-t? C-a-l-i-f-o-r-n-y? Why, child alive, how do you ever expect to git to Californy?"

"Oh I guess I'll git there all right, if I only keep agoin'."

"It's an awful long ways, I tell ye. I had a brother went out there three years ago. Ain't never heard a word of him since. Here, don't

eat any more o' that slop ; have some meat 'n' taters."

While she was loading my plate with mealy potatoes, fried eggs and bacon, the door was darkened, and, looking up, whom should we see, leaning with a hand on either side in the most familiar manner, but the filthy tramp from whom I had fled a short time before.

"Wal, Molly," said he, "I see you've got breakfast ready on time for once. Peter, my son, ye did wrong to run away from your poor lame father like that, an' my rheumatiz extry bad this mornin', but I 'spose I'll have to forgive ye, cause ye carried the trunk, to say nothin' of the good breakfast ye 've got ready for me."

The lady stood staring at him while he ran on this way, and when he stopped she turned to me and asked : "Is that man your father?"

"No, ma'am," said I, "I never saw him till last night."

"That's right, deny me, do. I tell ye, Molly, the wickedness o' that boy surpasses belief. There was two on 'em—twins. Peter an' Paul we called 'em, an' my wife was that proud on 'em, 't was a sin. Paul, he fell into the pigpen when he was three years old, an' the hogs et 'im up. Might better have been Peter there—"

"I don't b'leeve a word of it, an' my name ain't Molly nuther—"

"Oh well, what's in a name? as Shakespoke says. Never mind a plate, I'll eat right out o' the dish; I ain't so finiky as Peter."

He sat down at the table, and, drawing the dish of bacon and eggs to him, emptied the potatoes into it, and, taking the big spoon from the milk pitcher, commenced to mash them up.

His free and easy manner raised the lady's ire. Snatching the dish from in front of him, she exclaimed with flashing eyes:

"See here! who invited you to breakfast, I'd like to know? I think you've got a terrible nerve, to walk into a body's house an' help yourself; an' in such a hoggish way, too."

The tramp eyed her wrathfully, but replied quietly:

"See here, Molly, that's bad manners. Bad policy, too. I ain't so good-natered hungry as I be full. Hand over that dish, afore I hurt ye."

"You hurt me? You great nasty vagabone, you!" shouted Molly, and seizing him by his shock head of hair, she yanked him over backwards, nearly upsetting the table. Holding him down with one hand, she reached for the wooden spoon with the other. Seeing what

she wanted, I made haste to hand it to her. She brought it down with a gratifying whack right on his big red nose. He howled finely.

"Aha! who's gittin' hurt, now, hey?" Whack. "I'll teach ye!" Whack. "Molly, hey?" Whack. "Come in an' help yourself to my victuals, will ye!" Whack. "An' threaten me besides." Whack.

Every time she hit him, he yelled; also every time she hit him, she yanked him towards the door. I was standing by to help, but it was unnecessary. When she got him out on the doorstep, she let go of him, gave him a couple of vigorous kicks, and said:

"Now you be off about your business, if you've got any. An' the next place you go to, to git anything to eat, ask for it."

He gathered himself up slowly, looked himself over carefully, reached gingerly inside the door for his battered hat, which she had kicked towards him, and, as he turned sadly away, said:

"Molly, the fact that you're an old maid is a lasting monument to the good sense of the young men of your generation."

By the time I had finished my breakfast, the good woman had found out more about me than I knew myself before. She also told me

all about herself. She admitted that she was an old maid, but not for any such reason as the tramp had hinted at. She had been engaged to a young farmer in the neighborhood a good many years before ; but a tree having fallen on him, put an end to their prospect of matrimony. She said that she owned "as pretty a farm as ever laid out doors," and all clear too. She advised me to give up my foolish notion of trying to get to California, and stay on the farm with her.

She said she was getting along in years, she had not a chick nor a child belonging to her, was lonesome, liked my looks, believed I was a smart boy, and a good one too ; and promised that I should have good times if I stayed with her, and not be worked to death.

As I looked round the kitchen, the appearance of which spoke so loudly of substantial comfort, I was sorely tempted. But, my mind reverting to the final scene between her and the tramp, I feared that my fate, in case she should conclude that she had been deceived in her estimate of me, might not be all that I could desire. So I told her I guessed I would keep on. I had started for California, and I hated to give up. She said : "All right ; if you will, I s'pose you will. But mark my words, you'll be sorry

for it. An' many's the time, when it's too late, you 'll wish you 'd stayed with Liza Simpson."

She put me up a substantial lunch, *kissed me*, to my great confusion, and, wishing me the best of luck, let me go at last.

Within half a mile of the house I came upon the tramp, seated on a grassy bank by the side of the road. His appearance was not improved by his encounter with Miss Simpson's big wooden spoon. His nose was a great deal bigger and redder than before, and certain scratches and discolored lumps on his face made him look more disreputable than ever. I didn't fear him now. I had seen him licked. He saw me at the same time that I did him, and hailed me: "Here, you give over that bundle you stole from me this mornin', before I twist yer neck." I picked up a stone and said:

"If you bother me, I 'll knock your brains out. This is my bundle; you stole it from me while I was asleep on a log yesterday morning." He got up and came for me with his hand stretched out to grab my bundle. I let fly the stone, and hit him on his empty bread-basket. With a howl he doubled up like a jack-knife, while I took to my heels; thinking, what a fool the man was to bring so many un-



pleasant experiences upon himself. That was the last I ever saw of him.

I trudged along, enjoying the scenery and the fine weather, until I judged by the feeling in my interior department that it was time to eat again. I sat down under a big tree at the junction of a cross-road, and ate the lunch Miss Liza had given me, with infinite relish. I took this opportunity to inspect the contents of my bundle. With the exception of the provisions, everything was there. Doubtless it was the food I had so carefully saved that the tramp ate in the barn. As I sat there resting after my lunch, I noticed a great cloud of dust upon the cross-road, and, as I watched it, I saw that it was caused by a drove of hogs, which a man was driving in my direction. As they came on, grunting, squealing, and snarling at each other, the man, who was fully as dirty as the hogs, caught sight of the other road and shouted to me to "Head 'em off, an' not let 'em go up that way," pointing in the direction from which I had just come.

I jumped out into the middle of the road, and for the next few minutes I had a lively time. Although there were two ways clear for them to go, every blamed hog in the drove was bound to dodge by me, and go up that road. I yelled,

threw stones, ran from side to side of the road, sweat, fell down and barked my shins, and nearly got run over by the filthy beasts ; but did prevent any of them getting away in that direction. During all this time the drover was keeping up a continual yelling, and a volley of profane abuse in their rear. Some of them went up the cross-road, and some down the main road. When the drover saw that, he shouted to me :

“ You dog-gone fool : Wha’d ye drive them hogs up that road for ? Did n’t I tell ye not to let ’em go that way ? What ye good for, anyway ? ”

“ You told me not to let ’em go up this way,” said I.

“ Wal, s’posen I did, ye ought ter know I don’t want ’em ter go up there. They can’t git ter New Haven that way, can they ? Now git over the fence ’n head ’em off ’n’ drive ’em back here, while I look out for em.”

Left to themselves, the hogs had not gone far, but were all out on the sides of the road, rooting for something to eat. So I did n’t have a great way to go to head them off. When I got them back into the main road, I picked up my bundle and went along with the man.

“ Gosh, it’s hot ! ” said he, “ an’ these dumb

contrary critters has got me most beat out. How fur ye goin'?"

"To Californy," said I.

"Wal, then, why not help me drive these hogs down to the cars in New Haven? I'll give ye a dollar an' yer keep."

"How long will it take?"

"Oh, I dunno. Mebbe two days, mebbe three. It's right on your road, anyhow, you might as well make a dollar as not; there hain't much ter do, only to keep 'em out of people's dooryards an' fields."

"All right," said I, "I'll do it."

We were four days and a half getting those hogs to New Haven. Such another time I never had in my life. We walked in a continual cloud of dust, which stuck fast in the perspiration, till we could scrape it off with our fingers. Wherever there was an open gate, or a pair of bars down, those hogs went in. It was my duty to drive them out again, but it was almost impossible to get them to go back through the place where they entered, and while I would be chasing and yelling at them, my employer would stand out in the road and shout instructions, liberally sprinkled with curses, at me. When I had all I thought I needed of that, I told him I would quit and he

could drive his hogs to New Haven alone if he didn't stop swearing at me. I could see that it cost him a struggle to decide which luxury to deprive himself of. Having more sympathy, I suppose, with his legs than with his mouth, he finally agreed to confine his profanity to the hogs. I felt sorry for him, sometimes, when I saw him, in the effort to keep his promise, throw his hat down in the dusty road, clinch his hands in his hair, and jump on it with both feet. Fortunately, it was a soft and well-worn hat.

As the weather became intensely hot, we quit driving during the middle of the day, allowing the hogs to rest in some pasture or convenient woods. But, until they all lay down, we had to watch them for fear they should stray off. He made it a point to pass the night at certain farmhouses where he was acquainted, and they had facilities for storing his stock. As we took turns watching them during the night, we were not overburdened with sleep.

I was a happy boy when we got them safe at last into the enclosure in the railroad yard. When the last one was in and the gate closed, I said to Mr. Sibley: "There, thank the Lord, that job's done. Now, if you please, I should like to have my pay."

"Oh, no, the job ain't done, nuther," said he,

“ the agreement was ‘ aboard the cars in New Haven.’ It’s a good paymaster that pays when the work’s done. I’ll pay ye, as I agreed to, but not till the last hog’s on the cars.”

“ When will that be ? ”

“ To-morrer afternoon, I expect ; the cars ain’t here yet.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

MR. SIBLEY IMPOSES ON ME — DELUDED BY JOKE  
— LOADING HOGS — A MISHAP — SIBLEY'S  
OFFER DECLINED — WE START FOR NEW YORK  
— I HAVE SEVERAL EXPERIENCES ON THE RAIL-  
ROAD.

It was a playful fiction of Mr. Sibley's that I had agreed to help load them on the cars; but I did n't purpose to lose my dollar now. Especially as there would be a night's lodging and a couple of meals to get before the work could be done, so I said :

“All right.”

We went to a tavern, where Mr. Sibley was acquainted, and had supper. After supper he went with some men, with whom he had been talking about stock, into another room. I looked in, and saw them all standing in front of a long counter, drinking liquor and swearing at a great rate. I did n't like that, for I supposed they would all get drunk, and I was afraid of drunken men. I went to the door and looked out. I had a good mind to take my

bundle and run away ; but if I did I would lose my dollar, and I could n't afford that. I would have liked to go out and walk about the place, but I feared I should get lost, so I contented myself with standing by the door and wondering where all the people were going. As they were going in both directions, it was a puzzle.

I was tired and sleepy. I looked in the bar-room again. They were still drinking, and talking louder than before. I mustered up courage, at last, to go in and tell Mr. Sibley that I wished to go to bed.

"That your boy, Sibley?" asked a big, red-whiskered man.

"No," said Sibley, "boy I hired to help me drive the stock ; mighty good boy, too, smart's a steel trap."

"Come here, bub! What's yer name?" asked the red-whiskered one.

"William Kimball," said I.

"Any relation to Nelse Kimball in Pawtucket?"

"No, sir."

"No relation, hey? Ye look's if ye might be his boy. Here, have a taste o' this," holding out his glass to me.

"What is it?" I asked. "Rum?"

"Rum? No. Ye don't s'pose I'd drink rum, do ye? It's jest a cordial, to brace ye up when ye're tired."

"Leave the boy alone, Jake," said Sibley; "he wants to go to bed."

"That's all right, he can go to bed; who's stoppin' him? But he must have a night-cap, same's the rest of us. Here, boy, taste o' that—hol' on, till I put a little more sugar in it."

I took the glass and smelled of it, but did n't just like it.

"Taste of it, taste of it," said Jake, "ye can't tell nothin' by the smell."

I tasted. It did n't taste bad. I tasted again. It was nice and sweet. Sibley and another man were busy talking, and Jake told me to drink it all if I wanted to. So I drank it. I felt better right away, did n't care to go to bed just yet. Jake told the barkeeper to fill his glass again, and we drank it between us. I told Jake all about myself, and about my adventures with Miss Simpson. He had his glass filled again, and asked me if I could sing. "No," said I, "I can't sing; but I know a mighty good piece to speak. I spoke it at the exhibition, the last day at school."

"Git up on the table an' speak it," said he.

I stepped up in my chair, but somehow it



seemed to roll under me. I should have fallen if Jake had not caught me. He helped me up on the table and steadied me a bit, until I got the bearings of the lights, so they did n't whirl around any more. Then, making a bow to the barkeeper, I began :

“ On Linden, when the blood was low,  
All sunless lay the untrodden snow—”

I heard Sibley say : “ Jake, what in time have you been givin' that boy ? Come down out o' that, an' don't make a blasted show o' yourself.”

As he grasped my collar the lights whirled, then became one glowing streak, and I brought up on all fours on the floor. He yanked me to my feet again in a manner that mixed my ideas, and told me to go to bed. I did n't want to go to bed, but Sibley looked to be about nine feet high, and seemed to have authority over me. The barkeeper brought a candle, and told me to follow him. We went up the narrowest and crookedest stairs I ever saw. I kept knocking first against the banisters and then against the wall. I thought I should never get to the top. I remember the barkeeper showing me a bed, and the next thing I knew it was daylight, and I was lying on the outside

of the bed, with my clothes on. I did n't feel rested a bit. My head was light, I had a horrible taste in my mouth, and my stomach was qualmy. I did n't care for breakfast. Jake, seeing me moping round, winked to me to follow him. We went into the bar-room, and he asked me how my head felt. I wondered how he knew I had a headache.

"Come an' have a bracer, an' you'll be all right," said he.

When he said that, I knew in a minute what was the matter with me. I had been drinking liquor the night before. I must have been nearly drunk. Turning on my heel, I left him. "No, sir," said I, "you'll get no more o' that stuff down my throat." Something seemed to tickle him wonderfully. I could hear him "haw-hawing" way out in the other room.

At about ten o'clock, Mr. Sibley told me that he had got his cars, and I should come down and help him load the hogs. I did n't feel much like it, but business is business, so I went along. The cars, three of them, stood close to the pen where the hogs were. We got a gang-plank, and put one end in the open car door, and the other on the ground. There was a railing on one side, but none on the other. He told me to stand on that side and see that they

did n't fall off, he himself driving them up the plank.

It took some time to get them started. They would race around the pen, snort and squeal, do everything, in fact, but walk the plank. Having told me to stand by the open side of the plank, he now cursed me for not helping him to get the hogs started. So I left my station and helped him to chase them around the pen. When they did finally spy the plank leading up to the open door of the car, hoglike, they all wanted to go up at once, with the very natural result that a lot of them fell over the side in a wriggling, squealing mass.

"Now, then, where are you, puddin' head?" roared Sibley. "I thought I told you to stand by that gang plank, an' not let them hogs fall off. You good-for-nothin' idiot, you're no more use 'n' a wooden leg to a snake." It was hard to put up with his abuse now, when there was a gaping, grinning crowd leaning over the fence on all three sides of the enclosure. But I knew my dollar was at stake, and I surmised that he would not be unwilling to have me quit now and forfeit it.

My! What a lovely job that was! It was a hot day. The smell of the hogs, to one whose stomach was as rebellious as mine, was sicken-

ing. Yet I had to stand there and hold them on the plank. Frequently, I would have to put my shoulder against one of them, and, bracing my feet firmly, walk along until his head was entered at the car door. While doing that, probably half a dozen would fall off the plank behind me, calling forth oratory from Sibley. There was one big black sow that had caused me more trouble than any other during the drive. She was always on the lookout for a place to leave the road. She had headed more raids than all the rest put together.

I had belted her with clubs and stones all the way, and now, when I saw her on the gang-plank, I could not resist the temptation to give her a few final digs. I got my shoulder against her, and as we walked along together I punched her with my fist: "Darn ye! Take that, ye beast! You'll race me through no more orchards now, gosh hang ye! I'd like to be there when your throat's cut, you ol' devil you."

In her efforts to avoid my blows she floundered around until her forefoot slipped off the plank. She was well up near the car door, and, being big and heavy, I feared she would injure herself if she fell off. So I braced against her with all my strength. When she lost her footing, she became so frantic that she tried to

climb over the backs of those inside of her. They, of course, objected, and threw her off. She landed squarely on my back, one of her fore-legs over each shoulder. Her weight, and the sudden shock, bore me to the ground, the hog on top. As we rolled over, she clawed me with her sharp hoofs, tearing my clothes to rags, and scraping the skin off in many places.

I scrambled from under her as soon as I could; but before I could regain my feet, Mr. Sibley had me by the collar. He yanked me erect, and shook what little remaining sense I had nearly out of me. "Well, blast you!" said he. "Do ye mean ter kill that hog? I've noticed ye pickin' on her ever since I fust hired ye. If you injure one o' my critters, I'll have ye locked up."

"Look at my clo'es!" said I, gazing ruefully at my tatters.

"Sarve ye glad. What did ye want to abuse the critter for? She would n't 'a' done nothin' to ye, if ye'd left her alone."

This was great fun for the crowd, but I was nearly discouraged. I thought I would have been better off to have sacrificed my dollar on arriving in New Haven. I thought perhaps Sibley was trying to tire me out, so I would

refuse to fulfil the contract which he said I had agreed to. So, reflecting that no further damage could very well happen to me, I decided to hang on, and see the thing out.

We got them all loaded by noon, and returned to the tavern for dinner. I put on the good clothes that were in my bundle, and left the others under the bed. After dinner Mr. Sibley said : " Wal, I s'pose our business is over now. Here's yer dollar, an' I'm much obliged to ye into the bargain. You've done fust rate. I never had such a smart helper before ; an' if you like to stay with me, I'll give ye five dollars a month an' yer keep the year round. I got a farm up back there in Massachusetts, so I could keep ye goin' when there's no drivin' to do, wha'd' ye say ? "

" No, thank you," said I. " I started for Californy, an' I guess I'll go on."

" Wal, if you're goin' to Californy, New York's in yer way. I'm goin' through on the train with my stock to-night, an' if ye'll help me unload the hogs when we git there, I'll pass ye through. It's pooty near seventy-five mile, an' 'll be a big help to ye."

" If I get my clo'es all tore off my back again, it won't help me very much."

" No need o' that. It was only 'cause the

rainin' was gone offen one side o' the gang plank that ye had ter hold 'em up. The gang plank in New York is all right, an' I'll buy ye a good breakfast after we git unloaded, to boot."

Mentally resolving that I would take care not to be clapper-clawed by any of his blamed hogs again, I accepted. And that evening we went down to the railroad yard, with which he seemed to be perfectly familiar, and after walking a long way among the interminable tracks, and dodging switch-engines and flying cars, we came to a short red car with windows, and a funny looking thing, something like a dove-cote, on the roof. We went round behind it and found an open door, with a man sitting inside smoking a pipe, and looking over some papers.

"Hello, Edwards, is that you?" asked Mr. Sibley.

"Why, hello, Sibley, old man, what brings you round here? Got some stock for us?"

"Yes. I got three cars o' hogs som 'ers here in the yard."

"Hogs? Darn you an' your hogs, Sibley. We'll have to hold our noses all night. Cattle are bad enough, but hogs—Whew! I hope Bascom 'll put 'em on the head end. If he

don't I'll cut 'em out an' shift 'em myself the first chance I get."

"Oh, you goin' to take 'em?"

"Yes. Worse luck."

"I'm glad on it. How long 'fore you start?"

"Time's pretty near up now. I'm expectin' the engine every minute to fly us onto the train."

"Wal, I guess we better git on then; this is my boy, he's goin' along."

"All right, git aboard; here comes the engine after us now, I guess."

We climbed up into the car. It was painted green inside, and furnished with a desk, several chairs, and a stove. There were cooking utensils stowed in two long lockers, one on each side, together with waterproof clothing, and rubber boots for the crew. There were four bunks with bedding, and two high seats to enable men to look out ahead through the windows in the cupola, as the railroad men called the dove-cote.

While I was taking notice of these things, the car was struck a terrible blow that nearly knocked me off my feet. Visions of railroad accidents flashed through my mind. I jumped shrieking for the door. Before I could get



out, Edwards grabbed me by the shoulder and said :

“Set down there, and don’t be a fool. That’s only the engine couplin’ on. Boy’s a little green, ain’t he, Sibley?”

I now heard men shouting in front, and a clanking of iron as the engine was coupled to the caboose.

“Git up there an’ set in the cupola, bub, an’ you can see what’s going on,” said the conductor kindly, at the same time pointing to the seat, or I should never have known what he meant.

Just as I got seated, the engine—an enormous black, dirty-looking monster—started with a jerk that nearly threw me over backwards. As we went flying and bumping through the yard at terrific speed, I hung on to the window-sill, and, holding my breath, wished to the Lord I was out of there. Glancing back into the car, I was surprised to see Mr. Sibley and the conductor talking quite unconcernedly. I had a good mind to tell them that we were in danger of our lives, but, before I had a chance, there was another disconcerting bump, and, looking out, I saw the brakeman stoop over, pull an iron pin out of somewhere between the engine and caboose, and knock on

the end of the engine with it. This seemed to be a signal to the engineer ; for, no sooner had he done it, than the engine sped away from us like lightning, although we, too, were going a good deal faster than I liked. The next thing I saw was a car standing on the track right ahead of us. There was a man standing on the ground at the end of the car, holding another of those iron pins in his hand, and, though anybody could see that we were bound to run into the car awful hard, he never moved, but stood there with his eye on the rapidly approaching caboose. There was another man standing on our front platform, holding an iron wheel that he twisted a little once in a while. I wondered that he did n't tell the other fellow to look out, and get out of there himself, too, for it was evident there was going to be a fearful wreck. When I could stand it no longer, I yelled : "Look out !" jumped down, and once more started for the door. This time Sibley and the conductor jumped to their feet, looking scared. I made a flying leap out the door and fell backwards with a "dull thud " that shook me from centre to circumference, and caused me to see stars, comets, and fiery serpents. When I picked myself up and looked round, there was the caboose standing perfectly still not ten feet away,

while the conductor, Sibley, and the two brakemen were having a great laugh.

"By gum! Sibley," said the conductor, "you'll have to chain that boy up if you want to get him to New York. Durn him, he scared the life out o' me; I thought we were goin' to hit the corner of a car."

Come to find out, we had simply been coupling on to the rear end of our train, where we belonged. I sincerely wished we were in New York and it was all over. The conductor said he'd go and see if there were any orders, and get the time. While he was gone, the brakemen were walking over the top of the cars, feeling of the iron wheels. And when he came back he asked one of them if everything was all right.

"All right," answered the man. "Let 'er go," says the conductor. The man waved his arms, then came two little short toots from the engine way ahead somewhere, and then with an awful lot of jerking we started. Slowly at first, then faster and faster, the cars, engines, and buildings in the yard flying by us at a great rate. The first thing I knew, we were out of the yard and speeding along through the open country.

It was my first railroad ride. And after a

while I enjoyed it. I had resumed my seat in the cupola, and the conductor took the one opposite.

"Well, bub," said he, "how do you like it, as far as you've been?"

"First-rate," said I. Which I am afraid was not the exact truth.

"You don't want to do any more o' them flying trapeze stunts, we're goin' too fast for that now. Don't you bother your head about jumpin' till after you see me go. I'll get off plenty time enough to give you a chance to foller. Gosh!" He added, as we flew round a curve like the snapper of a whip, "Ole Bill's got a gait on 'im to-night fer fair; guess he must be tryin' to make Bridgeport."

I wondered what he meant by that, so I asked him. He said that as they could n't keep ahead of the passenger trains, they had to "take the sidin'";—whatever that might be—and he guessed "Ole Bill" was trying to get to Bridgeport. I didn't understand much better than before, but as I saw that talking with me interrupted the sharp lookout which he was keeping, I asked no more questions.

Every little while I could hear the engine far ahead, go to-o-t, to-o-t, toot-toot. Then the bell would ring awhile, and shortly afterward

we would pass a road crossing, with its sign, "Look out for the cars when the bell rings." I was getting used to the speed, and beginning to enjoy my ride, when, suddenly there was a terrible rush and roar, that scared me almost to death, something went by us, and Edwards told me it was the express from New York. I hoped it would n't happen again.

I soon became tired and sleepy. Mr. Edwards noticed it, and told me to lie down in his bunk. Mr. Sibley had already stretched out and was snoring peacefully. I gladly accepted the invitation, and after dozing and waking again in startled fear two or three times, as the caboose lurched around a curve, I went sound asleep. I awoke to a sense of the fact that we had stopped. I asked the conductor, who was sitting in the door smoking his everlasting pipe, if we were in New York.

"Nope," said he, "Bridgeport."

I thought I would get up and take a look at the place, but dropped asleep again, and the next thing I knew Mr. Sibley was shaking me by the shoulder.

"Come," said he, "our cars have been switched to the pen. We'll go and unload the critters, an' then get some breakfast."

## CHAPTER XVII

THE GREAT CITY ——— MANY AND VARIOUS EXPERIENCES ——— DOWN BY THE DOCKS.

I SCRAMBLED out, to find that we were in another big yard, which looked just like the one in New Haven ; but Mr. Sibley said it was Morrisania, just across the river from Harlem.

“Why, I thought we were going to New York,” said I.

“Wal, ain’t Harlem New York?”

“Oh, is it?”

“Of course.”

Wondering how that could be, I followed him to where our cars were, and we soon had the hogs in the pen. They were glad enough to rush out as soon as the doors were opened. He took me to a restaurant, where we had a fine breakfast, after which we walked through many streets, turning corners in all directions, until I wondered how he could find the way. Presently we came to a bridge over what Mr. Sibley said was the Harlem River. I never

should have known that it was a river ; it did n't run, and there were no banks to it.

When we got across this queer river, we came to a place where there were a whole lot of horse cars, like those I had seen in New Haven. We got into one and Mr. Sibley paid the fares. We soon left the town of Harlem behind, and came out into the open country. After awhile the buildings began to get thicker again, and he told me we were entering the great City of New York. How I stared. I tried to see something wonderful in it, but I did n't see that it was much different from New Haven ; all streets and houses, that was about all there was to it.

Presently Mr. Sibley said : " You 're goin' to Californy, hey ? "

" Yes, sir. "

" Wal, then, you want to go to Jersey City. I 've got to git off here to see a man 'bout buy-in' my hogs ; but you stay right on this car 'till it gits to the City Hall. The conductor will tell you, 'cause that 's the end of the road. Anybody will tell you the way to Jersey City from there. Remember the name, Jersey City. "

" Yes, sir, I 'll remember. "

" Wal, I git off here ; good-bye. "

" Good-bye, Mr. Sibley. "

As he passed through the door, I could not help thinking that I had got away from everybody who knew me, and was now among perfect strangers. The thought was somewhat of a shock at first, but I soon became interested in watching the street through the windows ; for we were now in the thickly settled part of the city. Presently the car stopped, the conductor stuck his head in the door and shouted : "City Hall. All out !" As there was no one in there but me, I judged that his remarks were intended for my benefit, so I picked up my bundle and got off.

There was a small piece of woods in front of me, and through the trees I could see a magnificent marble palace. I had seen pictures of such places, but I hardly realized that they actually existed. I hurried over to have a closer look at it. As I was crossing the sidewalk, a ragged, dirty little fellow, with a couple of newspapers under his arm, said to me :—

"Hey, Mr. Vanderbilt, do ye want a boy ter carry de trunk?"

"My name ain't Vanderbilt," said I, "an' I ain't got no trunk, only this bundle, an' I guess I can carry that myself ; I've carried it all the way from Oakville."

"Hey, fellers !" he shouted to a half dozen



boys like himself, "come 'ere." I went on about my business, but soon found that they were following me. "What is it?" said one. "Guess, an' I'll give ye half," said another.

"Hey, country, w'at's de price o' hayseed?"

"How do ye s'pose I know? I never bought none." At this they all laughed as if it was something very funny.

"How's wagon tracks sellin' up in your destrict, country?"

"Got any post-holes in yer trunk?"

"Lookin' fer help ter husk yer punkins, country?"

"Ye don't husk punkins, ye darned fool," said I, "ye husk corn." At this they all laughed again. There were eight or ten of them by this time, and, as I realized that, in their silly way, they were trying to make fun of me, I told them to mind their own business and let me alone. They all laughed again. They could laugh the easiest of anybody I ever saw.

"Wonder if he's got any pumpkin pie in de trunk?" said one, and he grabbed hold of my bundle. That made me mad, and I slapped his face. As soon as I did that they all began to holler, "Give it ter de country sucker! Punch de hayseed! Jab 'im in de snoot!" "Hey

Tim ! w'ere 's Tim ! Tim 'll cook 'is goose fer 'im."

A boy, about half as big as I was, stepped up to me, and, putting his face close to mine, but looking all the while at his bare toes, said :

"Hey, yer big country sucker, wha' 'd yer hit me little brudder fer? Sa-a-y, I 'll punch de snoot offen yer !"

I gave him a push, and, quicker than lightning, he hit me a stinger, right on the nose. My eyes filled with water so I could hardly see. I dropped my bundle, and rushed at him. He was like a flea. Every time I would reach out to grab him, he would jump in between my outstretched arms, hit me two or three times, right in the face, and be off again before I could catch him. All this time the crowd were yelling in great glee : "Sock it ter de hayseeder, Tim !" "Good boy, Tim !" "Hit 'im again !" "Oh-h dat was a good one !" "Once more fer de seegars !" Then suddenly the cry changed to : "Lay low ! Lay low ! M. P. ! M. P. !" And like magic my tormentors left me. My nose was bleeding profusely, and my right eye was rapidly closing.

A man, dressed in blue clothes with brass buttons, and a blue cloth cap, and carrying a short black club, with cord and tassels on the

handle, grabbed me by the collar and asked me what I was up to.

"None er yer darned business," said I. "If you 'll put down that club, an' wrastle fair, I 'll bet I can throw ye, big as ye be."

He let go my collar and commenced to laugh. I never saw such a lot of laughing idiots in my life. "Where ye from, sonny," said he, "Hohokus?"

"No," said I, "I ain't from Hohokus; I'm from Oakville, an' goin' to Californy, if you want to know. I wonder what became o' my bundle?"

"Did you lose a bundle? I wonder if Brocky Tim was in that crowd?"

"Yes," said I, "he was."

"Do you know him?"

"I sh'd think I ought to. 'Twas him that punched me."

"Well, then, I 'm afraid your bundle's gone, young feller. Tim an' his crowd are tough nuts. Was there anything valuable in it?"

"All my clo'es."

"Any money?"

"'T ain't likely. I carry my money in my pocket, not in my bundle."

"Lucky for you that you do. You 'll never see that bundle again, so now move on."

"Hey?"

"Move on, I say! Git a move on ye; clear out!"

"What is it your business what I do? I want my bundle."

There was quite a crowd about us. A young man took me by the arm and said: "Come with me, young fellow! Don't you know better than to sass a policeman?"

"Is that what he is? A policeman? I never saw one before. What right had he to tell me to clear out, when I wanted to find my bundle?"

"Oh, they can do pretty nearly as they like, and you mustn't be saucy to one of them, or they'll lock you up. Did you say you had lost a bundle?"

"Yes," said I, and I told him all about it.

"I can get it for you," said he.

"You can? How?"

"I'm a detective. It's my business catching thieves; and if you give me ten dollars, I'll get your bundle for you."

"I ain't got so much as that. An' if I had, the bundle ain't worth it."

"How much is it worth?"

"Oh, not more'n a dollar, if it is that."

"Well, give me a dollar, then, and I'll get it for you."

"It's a good paymaster that pays when the work's done. You bring me my bundle and I'll give you a dollar."

"I can't get it unless I have the money first, because I'll have to give the thief half a dollar."

"Is that the way you do? I sh'd think you'd put him in jail."

"You want to get your clothes, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, isn't it better to give the thief half a dollar, and get them, than to put him in jail and not get anything?"

"Yes, that's so. Well, then, you go an' get the bundle from him, an' I'll give you the dollar when you bring it to me."

"Give me half a dollar for him. I have n't any money myself."

"All right," said I, and pulling out two quarters I gave them to him. He told me I could sit on the City Hall steps and wait, saying he would be back in half an hour. I sat there and watched the people passing for a long time. I began to get hungry, and wished the young man would come back, so I could go and get something to eat. While I was wondering how he could find my bundle, the same policeman who told me to move on before came along.

"Hello!" said he, "what are you doing here?"

"Waiting for my bundle," said I.

"Waiting for your bundle? Why, do you expect it to drop out of the sky?"

"No, I don't expect it to drop out of the sky. I ain't so green as you think. There's a man gone to get it for me, an' he told me to wait here till he came back. He's been gone an awful long time. I guess he's havin' more trouble to get it than he expected, 'cause he said he'd be back in half an hour, an' it must be as much as two hours ago that he started."

"Did you give him any money?"

"Half a dollar. An' I'm goin' to give him half a dollar more when he comes back."

"You got out of it cheap. It's a wonder he has n't been back for that other half. Now, look here, sonny, there's no use of your sitting here any longer. You'll never see your bundle again. That fellow was a sharper, and you'll not see him again, either. So you better go on about your business, and get back to Podunk as soon as you can. And, in the meantime, hang on to your eye-teeth good, or some of these fellows will get them away from you."

"Won't I get my bundle?"

"Nixie!"

"Hey ?"

"No."

"Well, then, I want my fifty cents back, an' I'll stay right here and make him give it up."

"Holy Moses ! Ain't it green ? Say, country, move on before you give me heart-failure. Come, now, git !" He made a motion as if to hit me with his club, and, remembering my friend's advice not to sass the police, I moved on and away.

My impressions of the city were not favorable, but I was so hungry, that, for the time, I thought of little else than a place where I might get something to eat. As I dodged among the crowd, I wondered what Frank was doing now, and what he would think if he could see me. Presently I saw a boy, somewhat smaller than myself, very ragged and dirty, blacking a gentleman's shoes. He finished just as I came up, and turning to me said : "Shine ? Shine, boss ?"

"No," said I, "I don't want a shine. But if you can tell me where I can get something to eat, I shall be very much obliged."

He gave me a quick, sharp glance. "Got any money ?" he asked.

"Yes," said I.

"How much ? Nuff fer two ?"

"Yes, or three."

"All right, come on den, down ter Dutch Jake's, in Nassau Street. An' we'll git a beef stew. D'ye like beef stew? Ye can git beans, 'n' butter cakes, 'n' everything if ye've got de price. I gen'ly git stew, 'cause ye git so much of it fer tree cents."

"I dunno's I ever et any."

"You're from Jayville?"

"No, Oakville. But how 'd you know?"

"Ye don't have ter advertise dose tings in de papers. Who's been doin' ye up?"

"Doin' me up?"

"Yes, thumpin' yer."

"Oh? A boy the policeman called Tim—Tim—something or other."

"Brocky Tim?"

"Yes, that's it. Do you know him?"

"Course; everybody knows Tim. Ain't he a dandy boy?"

"Not a bit. He looks more like a tramp."

"I don't mean his togs. I mean wid his daddles. He's a knocker, ain't 'e? Look how he done you up."

"Oh, yes, he can fight, but I'll bet I could wrastle him."

"Here ye are, down here. Look out for de bottom step. It's gen'ly greasy. Soapy Sam



trows de dish-water under dere, an' he 's so cross-eyed, dat he can't trow straight, 'n' gits it all over de step."

We entered a dimly lighted cellar, filled with small tables covered with white oilcloth. Several tables were occupied by boys and men eating. Two waiters with greasy aprons rushed back and forth, shouting their orders through a little hole in the rear partition, through which the food was passed out to them. We took our places at a vacant table, and waited for some one to take our order. My friend kept up a running fire of talk with several of the other customers.

"W'at is it, Squibbs?" said one.

"Me cousin, from de farm."

"Is it any good?"

"Fine. Loaded wid rocks. Brocky painted it for me. How d'ye like de style?"

"Looks like his handwrite. It ought ter be good nuff fer oysters."

"Dat's so. Say, Jim," said he, turning to me, "w'at d'ye say if we have oysters?"

"How much will they cost?"

"Not much. Jake's a fren' o' mine. Hey Bones"—to the waiter, "wat's Jake keepin' yer fer now? Yer comp'ny? 'Ere's two gents waitin' fer oyster stews. If ye don't git a move

on ye, we 'll go down ter Skinny Maginniss's, an' you 'll git fired for losin' trade."

"Oyster stews, hey?" said the waiter. "An' who's goin' to pay for 'em?"

"Me cousin Jim from Yaphank. Not as it's any o' your business as I know on."

"'Tain't, hey? Well, you 'll find, Mr. Squibbs, that if you try any o' your games on me, yer liable ter git trun out. Did you order two stews, sir?" he asked me.

"Yes," said I, feeling that I was in for it, and might as well put a good face on the matter. I had heard of oysters, but had never seen any. When the stews were brought on, I tried in vain to eat mine. Hungry as I was, I could not stomach the strange flavor. I told Squibbs that I did n't think I cared for oysters.

"All right," said he, "jest leave 'em dere, dey won't be wasted, an' order w'atever you like. 'Christmas comes but once a year.'"

Determined to try no more unfamiliar dishes, I filled up on that good reliable staple, pork and beans, while Squibbs smacked his lips over the two stews. When we left the place, Squibbs was very anxious to have me spend the remainder of the day in his company. But I concluded that it was too expensive a luxury for me. I inquired the way to Jersey City, and

started off with a most indefinite idea as to where it was. I decided, however, that there was no particular hurry, and I could always ask again, for the Lord knows there were plenty of people about.

I wandered along for an hour or more, staring in at the store windows, and turning corners, with the utmost indifference. Suddenly I came out on the river front ; and there was the most wonderful sight I had seen yet. Ships and ships and ships ; as far as I could see in either direction, their masts formed a perfect forest. I stood and stared, like the country jay I was, jostled, and nearly run over by the hurrying crowds of busy men. Then I thought a closer inspection was desirable. So I picked my way carefully through the crowd of trucks, with their straining horses and swearing drivers, that filled the street, to the wharf beyond.

Big ships, some loading, and some unloading, lay at either side of the wharf. I stood and watched the boys leading the hoisting horses ; and thought that, if I had not started for California, I should have liked a job like that.

A man stood on the ship's rail, and when the load—barrels or boxes whatever it might be—

was hooked on, he would shout: "He-e-a-d." The boy would take the horse by the bridle and lead him up the wharf, causing the load to be rapidly hoisted above the rail. Then the man would shout: "Hi-i-i-gh!" The boy would stop his horse, and when the man said: "Lo-o-wer!" back him up to the place where he started from. Easy enough to do, and pleasant, I thought, to be a part of such a busy scene.

I gazed in awe at the great ships; their mighty masts towering to a dizzy height above me; the great anchors, hanging from the cat-heads far above the wharf, and the long taper jib-booms extending out over the heads of the truck drivers in the street. Of course I did n't know the names of all those things at the time, but you can see a thing and wonder at it, even though you don't know its name.

## CHAPTER XVIII

“ SHANGHAIED ” — I SIGN ARTICLES — THE  
CLIPPER SHIP “ CHANTICLEER ” OF BOSTON —  
CAPTAIN GRISCOM — GETTING UNDER WEIGH  
— BOUND FOR 'FRISCO.

I KEPT moving along down the wharf, mouth and eyes wide open. A tugboat lay across the end of it, and a group of men were standing near. There were more than twenty of them, rough looking and poorly dressed, in woollen shirts and trousers, with a leather strap about their waists, from which depended a sheath, containing a short butcher knife. Their faces were bronzed. Some, whose sleeves were rolled up, displayed a, to me, wonderful sight. Ships, anchors, crucifixes, and women, tattooed in red and blue, upon their arms. They were nearly all smoking clay pipes and seemed to be partially intoxicated, judging by the way they reeled about and their loud talk, which contained more profanity than even Mr. Sibley ever indulged in.

There were two men with them, who seemed

to have them in charge. They were well dressed, and altogether different from the others. A truck was unloading baggage on to the tug, consisting of heavy wooden chests and round-bottomed canvas bags. To each chest, and to some of the bags, were attached sets of tinware ; consisting of a quart measure, and a small pan. There were also a lot of narrow beds. As I came up, one of the well-dressed men, a big, red-faced fellow with an enormous watchchain, said to the other : "Get them together, Mike, and let's see if we've got 'em all."

"All right, sir," said Mike. "Here, min, git along here, till Mистер Murphy calls the roll ?"

"Ay, ay," said the men all together. They jostled around Mr. Murphy, who took a paper out of his coat pocket, and began reading their names. As each man's name was called, he answered : "Here, sir." When he came to the last—I did n't notice what it was—there was no answer. He called it over a couple of times—the men looking from one to another inquiringly—and, as there was still no answer, he began cursing Mike.

"You've lost that boy, you good-for-nothing, leather-headed red mouth. I've a good mind

to make you go in his place. Go up to Callahan's, and tell him to send me a boy, and hurry up; we're late now. I promised Captain Griscom to have the men aboard at two o'clock, and it's after one already. I've a good mind to knock that thick head off of you."

"Sure, Mr. Murphy, the bye was here a minute ago."

"You're a liar! And suppose he was, what good does that do? He ain't here now. Come, get a move on ye, I want a boy, and I ain't got any time to spare either."

While Mr. Murphy was speaking, Mike had been regarding me. He now stepped close to Murphy, and said, in a low tone, but which I overheard: "Sure, what's the use o' goin' way back to Callahan's? An' mebbe he ain't got no boy. There's a lad there that'll do ye, won't he?"

Mr. Murphy gave me a sharp glance, and said: "Yes, if you can get him. You might try, but don't do any funny business. There's too many 'longshoremen about. He looks like a countryman. Give him some kind of a steer, he'll swallow most anything, and if you get him and do it slick, I'll make it all right with you."

Mike approached me, and, lifting his hat politely, said :

“ Good-day, sir.”

“ Good-day,” said I.

“ I take it ye’re a sthranger in New York.”

“ Yes, I only got here this morning.”

“ Ah, now, ain’t that fine? I’m sure if ye niver was here before ye’d injy a sail down the bay, now, would n’t ye?”

“ Yes, I should like it first rate.”

“ That’s what I t’ought. Misther Murphy, there, the gintleman ye might have seen me spakin’ to, has invited a small party of frinds to take a sail round Staten Island this fine day ; an’ a bye, a cousin of mine, that was to be of the party, has failed to show up. An’ as Mr. Murphy has made preparations for eighteen, he hates to be disappointed ; so he told me to ax you would ye like to come along wid us, an’ if ye would, ye’re as welkim as the flowers in May.”

“ I should like to go first rate ; but I’m on my way to Californy, an’ don’t know as I’ll have time. How long do you expect to be gone?”

“ Oh, jest a little while. We’ll be back in time to take tea wid Misther Murphy in his palatial residence in Gowanus. I don’t s’pose it makes



much difference to you whether ye start for Californy to-day or to-morrer, does it?"

"Well, no, I dunno as it does."

"Arrah, thin, come wid us, an' ye'll have the finest times ye iver set eyes on, an' slape at Misther Murphy's to-night. So you'll be fine and ready to start for Californy, or Con-naught, or any other place, the first thing in the mornin'."

"I b'lieve you're right, an' I'll go."

"Sure, I knew ye had more sinse nor to refuse an invitation like that. Why! there's min in this town worth their thousan's, yis, an' their hundreds of thousan's, that niver sailed on this bay wid Pat Murphy. Would ye believe that, now?"

While talking, we had been gradually approaching the tug, on board of which all the men now were. As we jumped down on her deck, "Misther Murphy" said: "Well done, Mike, you're not such a chump, after all." Whereupon all the others laughed uproariously. "All aboard, cap!" he added to the tugboat captain. "Let 'er go!" A couple of loungers on the dock threw off the lines, the deck-hands hauled them in, and the next thing I knew the wharf seemed to fall away from our side.

As I stood looking at the strange scene, the long line of shipping, gliding swiftly past, the great river, full of all kinds of strange-looking vessels, and congratulating myself on my good luck, Mike tapped me on the shoulder and told me that Misther Murphy wished to see me. He said that Misther Murphy liked to have a list of his guests, and he would probably ask me to sign my name with the rest. "Ye'll have no objections to that, now, will ye?" said he.

"Why, no," said I. "I'd do a good deal more than that for Mr. Murphy."

"Aye, so ye would. I knowed ye was a dacent young feller, an' I tould him so. On'y for that, ye mightn't ha' got the chance to come wid us."

I thanked him, and entered the small room where Misther Murphy sat at a table, smoking a cigar and looking at a paper.

"What's your name?" said he gruffly.

"William Kimball," I replied.

He laid the paper out flat on the table, dipped a pen in the ink, and, after asking me if I could write, said: "Sign there." I wrote my name as nicely as I could, and then said: "I thank you very much for this nice sail, Mr. Murphy. I never was on a steamboat before." He stared at me as if he had never seen a boy

before, but did not open his head. Considerably abashed, I returned to the deck, wondering what kind of a man he could be. We were now well out in the bay. The other guests were sitting on the baggage, talking and smoking their pipes. There was a boy of about my own age among them, and he was smoking and talking as loud, and swearing as badly as any of the men. I thought I ought to get acquainted, so, stepping up to him, I said : " Good-day."

" Well, old ship," said he, " have ye signed ?"

" Yes," said I, " have you ?"

" Sure. A week ago."

" Boy," said one of the men, " cut me a pipe o' terbacker."

The boy pulled a plug of tobacco out of his pocket, and with his sheath-knife cut a pipe-full. He rolled it between his hands, took the speaker's pipe, and knocked the old filling carefully out of it. He then filled it with the freshly-cut tobacco, putting the old charred stuff on top. After lighting it, he handed it back to the speaker with the remark : " I don't mind fillin' yer pipe, but after this everybody smokes his own terbacker."

" That'll do now, none er yer lip," said the man.

"That boy's got too much cheek," said another, "talkin' an' smokin' with the men. If he don't take a reef in that lip o' his, he'll git 'imself inter trouble. Here you," to me, "git me a drink o' water." I would have been perfectly willing to get him a drink, but the manner in which he spoke angered me. I told him if he wanted a drink he could get it himself, adding that he was big enough in all conscience. He cursed me, and made a motion as if to strike me. Disgusted with their manners, I left them and went forward, where I saw that we were headed for a great ship that lay at anchor all by herself.

Even to my untrained eye she appeared to be a beauty. Her tall masts tapered to fine points, and were finished off with gilt balls. I could, see above her black bulwarks, the snow-white tops of her houses, and, as we passed under her stern, I read her name in gold letters: *Chanticleer, of Boston*.

We came up on her left side; ropes were thrown to us, and a rope ladder was dropped over. Mr. Murphy told Mike to stay in the boat and look after things, while he went on deck to report. After him, the men commenced to climb up, and, when everybody had gone but us boys, Mike told us to hook on the

chests and bags. Several of the men appeared at the ship's rail, and threw ropes down to us which we tied to the chests and they hauled them up. A man whom we had never seen before told them to look out, and not scratch the paint. When the baggage had all been hauled up, Mike told us to go up too.

The other boy, whose name turned out to be Peter Hall, started at once; but I asked Mike why I should go up there, saying that I was well pleased to stay where I was. "Git up dere?" said he. "Git up or I'll break yer neck."

"I sha'n't do it," I replied, angrily, and as he came for me, scowling and swearing, I ran away. There was n't much room to run, so he soon caught me. Grasping me by the collar, he started me for the ladder, cursing, shaking, and kicking me at every step. I yelled to him to "stop," and to "let me be," struggling all the time to get away. But it was no use, he had a grip like a fox-trap. When he got me to the ladder, I decided that I did n't want to stay in his old boat; so I grasped the rung, and, as I started, a voice over my head, sung out: "Here, you, what are you doing to that boy? Stop that, or I'll come down there to ye."

As Mike's grip relaxed, I looked up into the

thin brown face of an elderly man, with a long gray beard. The mouth was stern, and just at that moment the blue eyes glittered in anger; but, when he turned them on me, and said: "Come up, sonny," the kindly look in them was unmistakable. When my head rose above the rail, I saw the strangest sight I had ever seen,—the deck of a big clipper ship. I didn't know she was a big ship, but she was immensely bigger than I had supposed ships to be.

Mr. Murphy was on the quarter-deck, talking with Captain Griscom—the man with the long beard. I went up to him, and said: "Mr. Murphy, Mike has been kickin' me."

"Go forward," said he shortly.

"Hey?"

"Go forward, I tell ye."

"Down on the boat, do you mean?"

He was about to grab me as Mike had done, when the captain interfered. "Hold on, Murphy," said he, "what's this you've got here? That's a country boy, a farm hand, or I'm mistaken. Have you ever been to sea, sonny?"

"No," said I.

"No, hey? That proves it. What have you done, stolen anything, or only run away from home?"

I felt so guilty when he asked me that that I could have wished the deck to open and swallow me. "I did n't steal nothin'," said I. "It was money that we boys had saved up to buy uniforms with."

"Oho! So you have been stealing, hey? Well, I'll tell you one thing, young man, if I catch you stealing aboard my ship, I'll string you up by the thumbs."

I did n't know what he was talking about, and not feeling particularly interested in him or his ship, I turned to Mr. Murphy and said: "Won't you please tell Mike to let me alone? I think it's a mighty poor plan, to invite anybody to take a sail with you, an' then let Mike kick 'em. If I'd known that was the way you was goin' to do, I would n't have come."

"Hey? What's that?" said the captain. "What's this, Murphy! Here, boy, have you signed the articles?"

"I only signed one article, an' that was a piece of paper."

"Do you know what you signed for?"

"Yes. Because Mr. Murphy told me to."

"Now, Murphy, I won't have this. I don't approve of shanghaiing and never did. I want to be honest with my crew, and see that every man knows just what he signs for, and gets

what he is entitled to. Now you take that boy right ashore again—I won't have him."

Mr. Murphy's face colored up. He had been violently chewing his cigar butt while Captain Griscom was laying the law down to him. "It's all a mistake, Captain," said he. "Or else it's some of that scoundrel Mike's doings. One of the boys that I shipped for you cleared out, so I sent Mike up to the boarding-house for another, and he brought this one. He's signed the articles all right; what more do you want?"

Turning to me, the captain asked: "Have you received any advance?"

"Advance what?"

"Advance wages for the voyage?"

I gazed at him stupidly, wondering what he was talking about.

"You are aware that you've signed articles—an agreement—to make a voyage in this ship, ain't you?"

"No, sir, I have not done anything of the kind; what I signed was a list of the people that Mr. Murphy had invited to take a sail with him around some island. I forget the name of it."

"And you haven't received any advance wages?"



"Not a cent. Why should I receive wages? I ain't done any work since I helped Mr. Sibley unload his hogs."

The captain took a turn up and down the quarter-deck, and then asked: "Do you want to go to sea?"

"No," said I. "I'm going to Californy to be a gold miner."

He smiled a moment, and then said: "Why, I'm going to California, San Francisco. How did you intend to go?"

"Walk," said I.

At that he laughed outright. "I guess you'd find it a pretty long walk for a warm afternoon," he said. "Now, here, boy, I guess the best way out of all this trouble is for you to stay right here and go along with us. It's the easiest way for you to get to California. Have you any clothing?"

"No, Brocky Tim and his gang stole my clothes this forenoon."

"All right, then, you can take up your advance in slops. That will do now, go forrard."

"Where's that? Mr. Murphy said that to me before, an' I thought he meant down in the steamboat."

"Do you see this end of the ship?"

"Of course. I ain't blind."

"Well, this is aft. This is where I belong. The other end of her is forrard. That's where you belong. Now, go on!"

I went down on the main deck, and started forward. Three or four men, whom I afterward knew to be the mates, looked at me a little curiously, as I moped along forward. Hearing loud talking, I looked in at an open door from whence it came, and there were the crew, all smoking their everlasting pipes and putting their beds into the bunks, for this was the forecastle.

"Hello," said one, "here's the captain's clark; did the old man send me his compliments?"

Before I had a chance to answer, a deep, hoarse voice was heard calling out: "Turn to, there! Man the windlass!"

Pipes were hastily emptied and stowed away in the sides of bunks, while huge chews, bitten from plugs of tobacco, took their places, and the whole crew hurried on deck. I followed, of course, and climbed the short ladder to the to'-gallant-forecastle, where the men were already shipping the long windlass brakes. The mate, Mr. Brady, stood away forward where he could watch the chain come in. When the brakes were shipped and the men had slapped

them down a few times, he said : " Now, then, can't any of you fellers sing? Ye heave like a lot of sojers." A big fellow in a red shirt struck up :

Oh, where are you going, my pretty maid ?

*Chorus* : Away you, Ri-o.

I'm going a milking, sir, she sayed,  
On the rolling Ri-o Grand.

*Chorus* : And away you, Ri-o. Oh-h, you, Ri-o.

Then, fare you well, my bonny young girl,  
For I'm bound to the Ri-o Grand.

There was n't much sense to the song, but the way the men rolled out the chorus made it sound beautiful. They kept time with the windlass brakes, and that was what Mr. Brady was after. After the first verse, a little short, square man, who was hauling the chain about down on deck, said to the mate : " I'd like to 'ave some 'elp wi' this 'ere chain, sir."

" Where's the boys ?" said the mate. " Take the boys. Here, you two boys, go down there and help Mr. Simms stow the chain !"

Peter and I had to go down and help the fourth mate drag the heavy chain away from the windlass with long iron hooks. I did n't like that. Neither did Peter.

Mr. Simms was an Englishman, good-

natured, and as strong as a horse. He could snake that big chain along the deck in a way that was amazing. We had to coil it in long flakes, and when Peter and I would get a puzzling kink in it, he would hook on with us, and by a dexterous jerk straighten it out and land it just where it was wanted, remarking : "It's all in knowin' 'ow, lad."

Presently the mate called out to the captain : "Chain's short, sir."

"All right, sir," said the captain. "Vast heavin' an' pass out the hawser."

"'Vast heavin' men," said the mate, "an' get the hawser along."

The third mate was on top of the house, and he passed down the end of a rope as big as the maple-tree that stands in our front yard at home. The men got hold of it, ran it along the deck, and tied a rope to it, that had been thrown from the tug. The tug-boat men pulled it in, and made their end fast. When their Captain said he had enough, our men wound it round and round some big wooden posts that stuck up through the deck.

"Man the windlass again, hearties," said the mate, "an' break her out." As all the slack was in now, it was hard work. They could no longer slap the brakes up and down,

but had to climb on top of the one that was up, while the fellows on the other side lifted as hard as they could on theirs. They did n't sing now, but all hands kept shouting: "Break 'er out, boys." "Tear 'er loose," "Let go the man's anchor," and so on. The chain came in very slowly now. Pretty soon it began to come a little easier, and the mate shouted to the captain: "Anchor's aweigh, sir."

"All right, sir, heave it right up."

"Aye, aye, sir. Heave away now, bullies. Heave away."

I heard the turns of the hawser drawing taut on the bitts, and Peter said to me: "We're off now, Johnny. The tug 's got her. It'll be a long time before you see New York harbor again. Better take a last look at it."

## CHAPTER XIX

**"SAY SIR" — AN ABUNDANCE OF BOSSES — A  
LITTLE ADVICE FROM THE CAPTAIN — AN AWFUL  
LONG DAY — THE CAPTAIN'S ADDRESS — I  
LEARN MY NEW DUTIES RAPIDLY — BREAKFAST  
AT LAST — MCCARTHY TAKES MY PART —  
PRAISED BY THE CAPTAIN.**

I RAN to the rail, climbed on a cavil, and looked ; but the tug had already turned her round, so I saw nothing but the Staten Island shore.

"Here, git down off o' there ? What are ye doin' there ? Go 'n' stow that chain," said the third mate, who came along just then.

"Gosh," said I, "I sh'd think there was bosses enough here ; can't ye let a feller take a last look at New York ?"

"None o' yer lip now," said he, "an' say sir."

I wondered why he wanted me to say sir, and why they called everything I said, lip.

It was sundown before we got the anchor up, but we never stopped working a minute. The wind was fair, so as soon as the anchor

was at the hawse pipe, we commenced to make sail. And what a job that was. Everybody was hollering at once. Everybody was pulling on some ropes, and letting go others. It was worse than a barn raising. As I stood looking up, and wondering how in the world the men could climb round so carelessly away up there, the third mate sang out to me :

“Hey, boy, let go that buntline !”

I remembered what he had just said, so I answered : “Sir ?”

“Le’ go that buntline !” he yelled.

I was scared, for he looked mad enough to bite off a ten-penny nail ; but I yelled back, “Sir” at him. He swore awfully at me, ran over to the rail, and unwound a rope from a pin, saying he would break my neck before he was done with me.

“What have I done to ye now ?” I asked.

“You told me to say sir, an’ I did.”

“Git up there ’n’ loose the main-royal !”

“Sir ?”

“I’ll *sir* ye,” said he, and grabbing a rope, he gave me a cut across the back, “Git up there ! git up !” he yelled.

As the only place that I could “git up” to, was aloft, I sprang into the rigging to get away from him.

The captain saw me, and called out : " Here, here, come down out o' that ! Who sent that boy aloft ? "

" I did, sir," said the third mate. " I sent him up to loose the royal."

" Don't send him aloft yet for a few days ; he's green. Let him stay on deck awhile."

" All right, sir."

" Say ! " said I to the captain, " are you that man's boss ? 'Cause if you be, I want you to make him stop hittin' me."

He looked at me a moment, and then said : " Come up here ! " I went up to him, and he said : " You appear to be just about as green as they make 'em. Now I want to tell you something. On board ship, whenever you speak to an officer,—that's me, the captain, or any of the mates,—you must always say, *Yes, sir*, and *No, sir*—not *yes*, and *no* ; and every-time you say anything to an officer always add, *sir*. Do you understand ? "

" Yes, sir, I do now, but he jest told me to say *sir*, and the next time he spoke to me I said it, and he hit me with a piece of rope."

" He hit you, did he ? "

" Yes, sir."

" Well, I won't have any of that. But I sup-



pose you aggravated him beyond endurance. Go on now, and be more careful."

"Captain, sir, how many mates are there, sir?"

"Four."

"Four? Gosh, how c'n I tell 'em from the others—sir?"

"Oh, you'll learn to know 'em soon enough. Go on now, and help get the sail on her."

As I was going forward, I saw the third mate standing by the galley door, looking aloft and shouting to a man up there.

"If you hit me again," said I, "I'll tell the captain on you—sir," I added when I thought of it.

He glanced aft, and the captain's back being turned, he glared fiercely at me, and said: "G 'way f'm me 'fore I murder ye."

I never liked him very well. We worked all night long piling the canvas on her. The captain never left the deck more than a couple of minutes at a time. I was nearly dead, for the third mate chased me round, and kept me doing something all the time. My hands were raw from handling ropes, and I was starved to death. It was a beautiful moonlight night, almost as light as day, so there was no chance to hide. When it began to get daylight, I

said to myself, "At last! There are no more sails to set, so I guess we'll get a little rest."

"Mr. Brady!" called the captain.

"Sir?"

"Get the starboard fore topmast, and main to'gallant stu'ns'l booms up, and set the sails!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

I heard the men grumbling quietly as the mates began giving rapid orders, but they obeyed, and in a couple of hours three more sails were set, away outside of the yards, over the water. When that job was done, all hands were called aft, and divided into two watches. Peter was taken by the mate. That left me to the second mate. I was n't sorry, for my friend, the third mate, was in the mate's watch, while my immediate boss was the English fourth mate, Mr. Simmons, a quiet, nice man. When the watches had been chosen, the mate repeated that fact to the captain, who made us a little speech.

"Now, men," said he, "We're off on a long passage, and we may as well understand each other on the start. I'm here to drive this ship. And I'm a-going to do it. When the watch is called, I want the wheel relieved before the sound is out o' the bell. In making, taking in,

or trimming sail, I want ye to fly. Sharp's the word, and lively's the motion aboard my ship. I'll have no man struck or called out of his name. If any of you feel the need of fighting, let me know and I'll attend to your case. I can lick any two of ye, easy. If you do as well as you have so far, you'll get watch an' watch, an' plenty to eat. Mr. Brady!"

"Yes, sir."

"Which watch does the man at the wheel belong to?"

"Starboard, sir."

"Let the port watch relieve him, and send the starboard watch below for half an hour to get their breakfasts; then let them come on deck again for the forenoon watch."

"Ay, ay sir. Relieve the wheel there, the port watch. Go below, the starboard watch, and get breakfast. Mr. White!"

"Sir?"

"Take a couple o' men forrard an' reeve the cat fall, while the rest clear up the deck."

"Ay, ay, sir."

I was standing gaping about, as usual, when Peter said to me:

"Go below, you chump, an' git yer breakfast, you've only got half an hour. You belong to the starboard watch."

"Below where?" said I, for I did n't see any place lower than the deck where we stood.

"Into the forecastle. Don't you see your watchmates all goin' in?"

I saw them going into the house on deck, but I did n't see how they could call that *below*; however I was in more of a humor for breakfast than for an argument, so I followed them. Just as I stepped inside the door, somebody said :

"Where in Tophet is that boy? Hey, boy!"

"Hullo!" I answered.

"Hullo! Come, what are ye stannin' there for? Git along to the galley, an' scull that grub in here. We've only got half an hour—Wonder what he'll give us for breakfast, anyhow?"

I had learned, during the night, that when anybody told me to do a thing I did n't gain much by asking for their authority; besides I was hungry myself, so I went to the galley, a fine large kitchen extending right through the house from one side to the other.

It was paved with brick, which were clean enough to eat from, and was presided over by a big, fat, wholesome-looking darkey, dressed in a clean white cap and apron. He sat on a bench, smoking his pipe. I was going to step

right in, but he put up his hand, with a warning gesture, and said :

“Hol’ on ! Hol’ on, dere. Don’ you put you foot inside dat do’. I don’ ’low nobordy in my galley ’cep de steward, an de cap’n ef he wants ter. He’s boss, he is ; he kin go anyw’ere. Yo’ is after de starbowlines breakfas’, hey ? I hear de ol’ man sen’ you to breakfas’. He complimented ye too, did n’ he ? Look out fo’ him. He’s tough man, ol’ Joel Griscom, I tell ye. I sail wid ’im seben years, an’ I know ’im. Dere yo’ is, boy. Dere’s yo hash. Take it right along, an’ if any o’ dem tar-pots got anything to say ’bout it, tell ’em dey better not let me hear it ; dat all I got ter say.”

With a jerk he slung along on the brick floor a great tin pan, as big as a milk pan, heaping full of potato hash, nicely browned, and emitting a savory odor of onions that was terribly tempting to a famished boy. I grabbed it and hurried forward, remembering that we had but half an hour. As I entered the door I was greeted with a chorus of :

“Come, where ye been all summer ?”

“Holy smoke, boys, look at that pan o’ hash !”

“She’s a goin’ to be a work’us, but if ’e feeds us like that ther we’ll work ’is bloody ’ooker round the ’orn for ’im in great shape.”

"Ye need n't worry, matey, this won't last; we'll be lucky if we have pertaters a week from to-day."

"Yes, or three days from to-day."

"Ay, or to-morrow."

I wondered why they prized potatoes so highly, and why they should not have them all the voyage if they were so fond of them.

Each man was armed with a tin pan and an iron spoon. When I set the big pan down on the deck, they all made a dive for it. A big strapping Irishman rapped a German over the knuckles with his spoon, saying: "Afther me's manners, Dootch; wait till the white min are sarved."

"Where's the coffee? Hey, boy, w'y don't you git the coffee along 'ere? W'at's the matter with you, anyway? A taste of a rope's end would n't hurt you any."

I returned to the galley, and the cook handed me out a gallon and a half coffee-pot, chock full of some kind of artificial coffee, sweetened with molasses.

A man snatched it out of my hand at the forecastle door, and, handing me a big wooden box, told me to go aft and get some bread. I began to think my chance of getting any breakfast was slim; but I took it to the galley

and told the cook the men wanted some bread.

"W'at I got to do wid dat?" said he. "Go to de steward."

"Where is the steward?"

"I dunno, honey; las' I seen of 'im he was in de maintop shoein' a goose."

I knew where the mainmast was by this time, though what kind of a nautical operation "shoein' a goose" was, I had no idea. I started aft again, and asked a man who was coiling up the ropes where the maintop was. He pointed overhead. "How am I to get up there with this box?" I asked.

"What ye want up there?"

"I got to git some bread from the steward, an' he's in the maintop shoein' a goose."

He pointed to the big double doors in front of the cabin, saying: "The steward's in there." As I was going in, he yelled at me: "Hey, you fool, don't go in; knock!"

I knocked several times, and, presently, the most genteel looking and best-dressed man I had yet seen came to the door, took my box from me without a word, and brought it back in a few minutes, full of hard tack.

"I want *bread*," said I. He raised his eyebrows slightly and returned into the cabin.

When I reached the forecastle, there was another hullabaloo because I had been gone so long. I cast an apprehensive glance into the hash pan. There was just about enough left for my breakfast. Just then the "Dootchman" leaned over with his spoon to scrape it into his plate.

"Avast there, Dootch!" said the big Irishman. "Where does the bye come in? None o' yer Dootch thricks here. This is a Yankee ship, an' that's an Oirish bye, an' he's goin' ter have 'is share o' w'at's goin', or McCarthy 'll know the raison why. Ye have no pot an' pan, have ye, bye?"

"No, sir."

"Don't ye *sir* me, nor no man on'y the officers. Here, take mine, an' trow dat hash under yer shirt mighty lively."

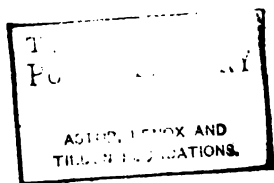
It was the first kind word almost that I had received, and I appreciated it. I also appreciated the hash, and under my expert manipulation it soon fulfilled its destiny. About a week's sleep seemed to be the most desirable thing next, but the port watch had had no breakfast, and it was their time we were using.

So, when the fourth mate called us, we went on deck again, sore and stiff, while they came





"AVAST THERE, DOOTCH! WHERE DOES THE BYE COME IN?"



below and stayed until noon. There was plenty to do to limber us up. The anchors, though catted and fished, had to be taken in on deck and lashed. Water casks and spars, which had been temporarily fastened, were now secured for good. The two big anchor chains had to be stowed in the chain locker, and the towline, when dry, coiled away in the lazarette. There were stu'n's'l booms to send aloft, and gear to reeve on the other side, to say nothing of fore to'gallant, and main-royal, stu'n's'l booms and gear. Then there was chafing gear, barrels and barrels of it, to be carried aloft and put on wherever one rope touched another, or where a rope touched a spar. Oh, yes, there was work enough, not only for that day, or that week, but for the whole voyage, no matter how long it lasted.

But there was no more such killing work as we had the first day. That is the hardest job there is,—getting a ship under weigh, or bringing her to anchor. While we would be working away, the captain would suddenly sing out, “Lee fore brace!” or, “Lee cross-jack brace!” Then we would have to drop everything and run like sixty to the braces. When he gave an order he wanted it executed as soon as it was out of his mouth, or he would

roar like a bull for the officer of the watch. Just as likely as not, we would n't move the yards more than a couple of inches when he would sing out, "Belay," but every one of the eighteen yards had to be braced just that little bit. Then there was a pull at tacks and sheets, and perhaps just as we would take up our various jobs again, it would be, "In royal stu'ns'l!" or, "set it," if it was in.

He said he was there to drive her, and he did drive her, night and day, day and night. He never left the deck himself in the night, and was there nearly all the time during the day. He came on deck one day the wind was blowing good and stiff, and I was wondering how masts and rigging could stand the strain of driving that great ship so furiously through the water. We had taken in the to'gallant stu'ns'l, and I noticed Mr. Judson, the second mate, glancing anxiously at the fore topmast stu'ns'l tack, as the boom would buckle like a whipstock, on every weather roll. The old man glanced aloft, and bawled out: "Mr. Judson!"

"Sir?"

"What's the matter with the main to'gallant stu'ns'l, sir?"

"Nothing, sir ! There came a puff, an' I took it in."

"Well, sir, there's no puff now. Set it again ! What do you suppose I have stu'ns'ls for ? You 'll never get anywhere, drifting along like this." He called it *drifting*, and she was going like a scared cat.

We had such fine weather for the first week, that I got my sea legs on without being sick a minute. I took an interest in the work, and learned rapidly. Captain Griscom was as good as his word, and fitted me out in finestyle from the slop chest. Although I had to do the boy's work in the forecastle,—bring the grub from the galley, carry back the empty pan, and keep the lamp filled,—Denny McCarthy would not have me imposed upon. He even made "Dootch" help me to scrub out the forecastle, saying : "No Irish b'y shall scrub for a Dootchman while McCarthy lives."

This was a great help to me. Peter had to do it all alone in his watch. I was well treated by everybody. Mr. Simmons, the fourth mate, would tell me stories of his adventures, in the night watches, and teach me seamanship. I learned so fast, that the first time the mizzen skysail was cleared up in my watch, I went up and furled it. When I came down the cap-

tain asked me where I learned to do that. I told him the method had been described to me, that was all I knew about it.

“Good boy,” said he, “you ’ll do.”

## CHAPTER XX

CAPTAIN GRISCOM TAKES AN INTEREST IN ME —  
HE TEACHES ME NAVIGATION — “THE TRADES”  
—— “THE DOLDRUMS” —— NEARING “THE  
HORN” —— THE STRAITS OF “LE MAIRE” ——  
WRECKED —— I ALONE ELECT TO STAY BY THE  
WRECK WITH THE CAPTAIN.

How I should have liked for Mr. James Baker to see me then. How did his old furniture factory compare with this magnificent clipper ship? Yes, or how did he compare with a man like Captain Griscom?

When we got into the “trades,” where the wind blows steadily, night and day, from one direction, the captain took a good deal more rest. He would lie on a sofa in the cabin, where he could see the tell-tale compass, and read story books, and yell at the man at the wheel if he got a quarter of a point off his course, by the hour. He took a notion to have the cabin holystoned; so he had Peter and me, each in our watch, to do it. One day, as I was down on my knees scrubbing away for dear life, I happened to look up, and found that he was looking right at me.

"I was just thinking," said he, "that it's just thirty-one years ago to-day that I was doing the same job that you are now, aboard the old *Plymouth Rock*. 'T was my first voyage, too, and in all that time I've never helped a boy. If you was honest, I'd like to help you make a man of yourself, for you're smart; but a boy that'll steal is no good."

I had felt so proud of his praise a few days before when I furlled the skys'l, that I nearly blubbered when he accused me of stealing. I know my face was awful red when I looked up and said :

"What did I ever steal, sir?"

"Why, you told me, when you first came aboard in New York, that you had to run away from home for stealing."

"You're mistaken, captain, I told you that I had *not* stolen anything. Don't you remember, sir, that you asked me if I had?"

"Yes, but what was it you said about some money?"

I told him the whole story from beginning to end. "I believe you," he said. "Such cases are common enough. Can you read and write?"

"Of course," said I. "I took the first prize in our school."



"The deuce you did ? When ?"

I was about to say that it was an awful long time ago, when I remembered that it was not, and told him.

"Hand me that book !" said he, pointing to a "Bowditch Navigator," "and you take the slate."

He gave me several examples to do, which were as easy as rolling off a log. He seemed greatly surprised to find that I knew anything. "How do you like going to sea ?" he asked me.

"Why, it's not so bad, sir."

"Do you think you'll stick to it ?"

"I don't know, sir. You see I started for California to dig gold. I sh'd like to be rich."

"My boy, not one man in ten thousand gets rich digging gold. Not one in one thousand makes a decent living at it, and most of them are a drunken, ragged, poverty-stricken lot of broken-down gamblers and cutthroats. You don't want to be like that, do you ?"

"No, sir, nor I would n't either."

"No, I don't hardly believe you would ; still, it's hard to tell. I've taken hundreds of 'em to California, bright smart young fellows as you'd wish to see, and I see some of 'em in 'Frisco

every trip, worthless, drunken vagabonds. Going to sea is not by any means a desirable life, and I would never recommend it to a boy; especially a smart boy, with as much education as you've got. But, if you conclude that you'd like to follow the sea for a living, I can help you, and I will, if I find that you are the kind of boy I take you for. At any rate it would n't do you any harm to study navigation in your spare time, instead of lying in your bunk, and listening to the old sailors telling what fools the captain and officers are."

I had to laugh at that, for it was just what they did. "There's Peter, sir," said I, "I guess he always expects to go to sea."

"Yes, and all he'll ever be good for will be to sling tar. Well, what do you think? would you like to study navigation?"

"Yes, sir, I should, even if it was only just to satisfy my curiosity, and find out how you can tell where the ship is every day."

"All right, then, to-morrow I'll give you a lesson. Peter can do the holystoning; it's all he's good for. But if you want to live in peace forrard, don't let on to anybody what you're doing."

I thanked him, and he went on deck; leaving me to my own reflections.

I found the study of navigation not only easy, but very interesting. The captain was greatly surprised to find that I knew what latitude and longitude were. And I was delighted with his clear explanations. I could have studied all day under his instructions. Peter advised me to be more expeditious with my work. He said he could n't see as I had done a thing ; the job was just as he left it on his last watch, and, if the old man found out that I was "sojerin'," *he* would not like to be in my shoes. I said nothing of how I was passing my time, and, as the captain appeared to be a little ashamed of what he was doing, he took great care not to let the man at the wheel or the steward get on to us.

At this time we were running down the northeast trade wind, a wind that blows continually from the northeasterly quarter. The wind being as steady as a clock, and the weather perfect, there is but little work to do with the sails ; so all hands are kept busy with the endless repairs that are required aboard ship. Peter soon got tired kicking with me for not doing my share of the holystoning, though he continued to wonder how I passed my time. There was a great awakening when, one day, the captain called me on deck, and, handing

me an old quadrant, told me to take an altitude.

He had thoroughly explained the use of the instrument the day before. He had his own sextant with him, and we took the altitudes together ; so that he could prove the correctness of my observations by comparing them with his own. We would bring the sun's image down to contact with the horizon. Then he would say : " Ready ? " And I would answer : " Ready, sir." " Watch ? " " Watch, sir." " Time ? " " Time, sir." Then I would read off my altitude, and he would tell me how it compared with his. I soon became expert, so that I could do it as well as himself or the mate. After that, he frequently had me take " chronometer sights " for him ; or, I would take the time from the chronometer while he took the sights. He always made me work them up in either case, and find the longitude.

As all hands could see what was going on now, I got a good deal of guying from the men, and was nicknamed " Reuben Ranzo." There is a sea song, which says :

Poor old Reuben Ranzo.

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

Ranzo was no sailor,

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

They lashed him to a grating,

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

And gave him four-and-twenty,

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

They took him in the cabin,

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo,

And taught him navigation,

*Chorus.* Ranzo, boys, Ranzo.

And so on, and so on. "Ranzo" is a tops'l halliard or a brace "chanty," the men taking two swinging pulls at the words "Ranzo," in the chorus. It became quite popular in our watch, because, I suppose, they thought my case similar to that of "Poor old Reuben Ranzo."

Having run out of the "trades," and into the "doldrums," that most trying belt of blistering calms and drenching rain-squalls which fills nearly all the space between the northeast and southeast trades, the men—as I afterwards learned—asked permission of the mate to have a "shave" when crossing "the line," as sailors call the equator. This is a time-honored custom. It is supposed that Neptune, the king of the sea, lives on the equator, and all persons on crossing that imaginary line for the first time, must be introduced to his majesty, and shaved by his private barber. This cere-

mony constitutes them full-fledged sons of "Old Nep."

When the mate approached the captain on the subject, he declined to give his permission, saying he would have no tomfoolery that might interfere with the working of the ship; for it is of the greatest importance, in these latitudes, to trim sail to every passing breath of air, as that is the only means of fanning the ship along. So I escaped the honor of an introduction to "King Neptune." But, to console them for the loss of the sport which they had hoped to have with us greenhorns, he gave them a glass of grog, and I guess they were just as well satisfied. Sailors, I am sorry to say, prize grog at sea more than any other one thing.

Having at last worked our weary way through the doldrums, we caught the southeast trades, and once more—though close-hauled—enjoyed the luxury of a steady breeze.

Long before crossing the line I had become interested in watching the new constellations as they rose in the southern horizon. And now, as the good ship tore along on a taut bowline to the southward, I looked every night to see how much lower the Big Dipper was getting to the northward. When at last

the time came when not a star of it was visible, while the Southern Cross had climbed well up in the other direction, I realized that the world was surely round, and that I was a long way from Oakville.

The men now began to get their stormy-weather clothes in shape, and we bent new and strong sails in place of the old rags that had been good enough for the fine weather.

We hardly knew when the trade wind left us, for, instead of dying out, as it usually does, and leaving you to the mercy of any stray breeze, or none at all, it slowly drew round to the eastward. Again we hung out studding sails, and the old man "cracked on," until it seemed as if the whole towering mass of sails and spars must be blown clean out of her. And how she did go! Day and night, night and day, she rushed along like a railway train.

I thought to myself, "This world must be awful big, when a ship can keep up such a gait for days and weeks and not get anywhere. Gradually the weather began to change. The bright sky became cloudy; we would have to take in some of the "light kites" at night; the studding sails could only be set occasionally; and at last, to the great joy of all hands, we got an order to send the booms

down. We were rid of them for awhile, though the men said that, if the weather came fine for half an hour, the old man would make us get them up again.

Everybody said they had never known such a run from the line to "the Horn," as we were making. A record-breaking passage to San Francisco was predicted, and all hands felt proud of the gallant ship. The men began to talk about the straits of Le Maire. They said that, if the wind held, we would probably go through them. Some of the old hands, who had been there before, did n't seem to like the idea, while others said that anything must be better than "the Horn."

As it was my daily task now to go aft and work up the sights, I managed to ask the captain one day if he was going through the straits. "Certainly, if the wind holds," said he ; "you don't suppose I want to be all winter getting round this corner, do you ?"

One morning we came on deck to find the yards checked in, and land, or rather rocks, in sight ahead. Tierra del Fuego, on one bow, and Staten Island on the other. The weather was far from fine. The main topgallant sail was on her, but we had to take it in before four bells. It was quite cold, and there was a



strange kind of fog that seemed to be blowing by us in lumps. The captain watched the land through his glass, and occasionally gave an order to have the yards braced, just the least bit, one way or the other. We didn't pretend to do anything else but trim sail. By eleven o'clock we were fairly into the straits, and she was humming along at a great rate. The captain went below to get a cup of coffee just before twelve o'clock, leaving the mate in charge of the deck. He had not been gone ten minutes, when a heavy squall struck her. The weather mizzen topsail sheet parted, the sail gave a half dozen thunderous flaps and was gone; the streamers, and ribbons from it wrapping themselves like great snakes round the rigging and gear of the main, where they continued to snap in the wind like discharges of musketry. The clew of the sail, with its heavy iron spectacle, went like a cannon-shot through the belly of the main tops'l, which immediately split, and commenced to flog itself to pieces.

Another squall of wind and snow partially headed her, and, being stripped of her after sails, she paid off before it, in spite of the helm, and rushed madly for the rocks.

At the first sound, when the sheet parted,

the captain leaped to the deck, and began yelling out orders which the mate repeated. And we worked like tigers. The wind shrieked like a thousand furies through the rigging, the fine snow cut our faces like shot, and the flapping of the torn sails made so much noise that it was hardly possible to hear an order. The men showed at this time the benefit of the thorough training they had received. All at once there was a dreadful crash. I was thrown to the deck, and buried under a mass of ropes. She had struck on the rocks with such force that all three of the topmasts broke short off at the caps. Above the howling of the wind I could hear groans and cries, as of men in mortal agony.

I tried to extricate myself, but it was only after cutting through dozens of ropes that I got free. The short winter's day was already waning. The ship lay comparatively quiet, though the wind still howled fearfully ; but, as we had no sail set—everything having gone by the board—it had but little effect on her.

I found the captain, mate, and several of the men, busy with knives and axes, clearing away the wreck and cutting out such of the men as were imprisoned under it. The forward house, where our fore-castle was, was

smashed flat. So, when we got all hands out, we were obliged to take refuge in the cabin. By that time it was midnight. We had cleared away such spars as were battering at her sides, and she lay, fairly comfortable, in her rocky cradle. Two men were left on watch to report anything that might happen. The rest—except the captain—lay around wherever they could, and slept.

Fortunately, no one had been seriously injured. So, next morning, all hands turned to again to clear up what remained of the wreckage, while the captain and mate held a consultation on the poop.

Daylight showed that the squall had driven her into a bay, well up behind a rocky point, which sheltered her from the heavy seas. Here she had run on to a reef of rocks, about a quarter of a mile from the land. The hand lead showed that she was more than two thirds of her length on this reef, her stern being afloat.

As we worked, I heard some of the men wondering what he—the captain—was hanging on here for, why did n't he get the boats out, and get away from the wreck.

"Lay aft, all hands, to breakfast!" called out the mate. Somewhat sheepishly the men piled

into the cabin. The cook had made coffee on the cabin stove, and this, with hard bread, and cold salt-horse, was our breakfast. We ate it in silence, awed by the presence of the captain and officers.

When we had finished our breakfast, the captain said, "Well, men, the ship's ashore. And the voyage is up. The next question, what's to be done, is for you to decide. The nearest available land, with the wind this way, is the Falkland Islands. It's a long trip in open boats, in this latitude, and you all know the chances. On the other hand, here's the ship. Unless the wind hauls, so as to blow directly in here, she may last a long time. While you stay here, you will have plenty to eat and drink, shelter, and a fire. And we are liable to be picked up. Now, what do you say?"

As no one made any answer, he added, "I see you're a little bashful. I'll go on deck for half an hour, and you can talk it over among yourselves." He called the mate, and together they went on deck. Then the men began to talk, and argue the question from both sides. Finally, it was agreed that there was no use waiting there. They might as well start at once. So, when the captain returned, they

told him they had decided to fix up the boats as comfortably as possible, and leave her. He told them all right, but said that he should stay, in hope of being rescued and perhaps saving something from the wreck. And he promised that any who would stay with him should be well paid for his time, if he was able to do as he hoped. No one offered to stay. So, to simplify matters, he said : " All who intend to leave, pass to starboard."

Every man jack, mates and all, even the cook, who had sailed with him seven years, passed to starboard, except me. When he saw his officers desert him, he bit his lip and his face flushed for a moment ; then he laughed, and said : " So it 's you and I for it, boy, hey ? Well, all right. I guess we 'll make out as well as the rest. When do you intend to leave, men ? "

" As soon as we can get the boats fitted out, sir," said the mate.

## CHAPTER XXI

THE CAPTAIN AND I DRIVE THE CREW INTO THE BOATS — WE DISCUSS OUR PROSPECTS — ATTACKED BY “FUEGIANS” — WANTED, A SIGNAL — I SUGGEST A KITE — WE BUILD ONE, AND IT IS A SUCCESS — WE MAKE PREPARATIONS TO ABANDON THE WRECK — “HELLO.”

SHE had four boats, a long boat, and three small ones. They got them all out on deck and fitted them with masts, made from studding sail booms, and sails. They made canvas covers for them, so they could be housed in and made comfortable. Then, after having supplied them with an abundance of provisions and water, they put their own belongings into them, and on the first middling fine day, they commenced to hoist them out.

They had been three days getting ready, and during all that time, the captain had paid no attention to them. But after they had hoisted out the third boat, he sung out in the most natural way in the world, “That ’ll do, men. I ’ll keep that other boat myself.”

"Oh no, you won't," says the mate, "we've got her ready, an' we'll take her along."

The captain jumped into the boat, and pulling a pair of loaded revolvers from under his vest said: "Get into your boats, and get out of here. I'll give you just five minutes to get clear of my ship."

"Two can play at that game, old man," said the mate, and he started for his room to get his pistols. I met him in the cabin door with them; but I had them pointed at him, and told him to clear out. With a yell of rage he dashed at me. Shutting both eyes, I fired. I think I must have hit him, for, when I opened my eyes he was leaning against the side of the door with one hand, and holding the other to his head. I was half crazy with excitement and fear, and shouting, "Will you go?" I fired again—over his head. He cursed me horribly and broke for the rail, where the rest of the crew were tumbling helter-skelter into the boats, the captain having opened fire on them, as soon as he heard my first shot at the mate.

They shoved off, hoisted their sails, and, shaking their fists at us, disappeared in the haze.

"Well, Billy, so you decided to stay by the old man, hey?"

"Yes, sir."

"What made you do that?"

"Because I thought you knew more than they did, sir ; and, besides, I should think it was a sailor's duty to stay with his captain."

"It is supposed to be, but in a case of this kind I don't care for any but volunteers. I don't know as I ought to have let you stay. We may never get out of here."

"They may never get anywhere either, sir. I don't know but what our chances are as good as theirs."

"Just about. Not much to choose between them. While this westerly wind lasts, and it's the prevailing wind here, nothing but homeward bounders can go through here, and they seldom bother with the straits. They can go round outside all right. And even if a ship should go through, homeward bound, by the time she saw us, she would be so far along that she couldn't do anything. You see, our spars being gone, we can't show any signals. I might send up a rocket, but they'd hardly see that in the daytime, and we can't tell, in the night, when there's a ship about, so there's not much use in firing them at all. Still, I suppose we might as well burn them as leave them."



As he said there was a possibility of the natives coming aboard, he decided that we should keep watch and watch ; and it was just as well that we did. For, two days afterwards, while I was on watch in the afternoon, I saw three canoes, or more properly scows—for they were the most awkwardly constructed things you could imagine—coming round the point.

I hastily called the captain, and we loaded all our guns,—four carbines and four revolvers. As soon as they got within hailing distance, we shouted and pointed our guns at them. One fellow stood up and commenced to palaver. I remarked to the captain that perhaps they were friendly.

“All right,” said he, “if they are, let them show their good will by staying away.”

As they continued to paddle their clumsy boxes along, he let drive at the commodore with such good aim, that he whirled half round and dropped overboard. The rest paid no attention to him, but with a yell, they increased their speed.

“Don’t waste a shot,” said the captain, “fire the guns first, and keep the revolvers for close quarters.”

They were coming in single file, and each of us, taking a carbine, took good aim over the

toffrail and waited. They seemed to be encouraged by our silence, and paddled furiously.

We fired together, and by good luck disabled two of the rowers on the starboard side of the leading boat. That caused her to slew athwart the next fellow's hawse, and before he could check his way, he rammed her. The third one came along and ran into the others. As they were now within easy pistol range, we enjoyed some fine practice. Judging by the yells that came from them, they were also taking a lively interest in the proceedings.

"Hurry up, Billy, and load some of those guns," said the captain, "while I amuse these fellows. It would be too bad to disappoint them after coming so far on such a cold day."

By the time they got their tangle of tubs, oars, and dirty carcasses straightened out, their curiosity was satisfied, and they put their two remaining scows about. They soon disappeared behind the point, and that was the last we saw of the "Lords of the Isles."

"Captain," said I, one day, after we had been a week on the wreck, "I think I can set a signal that would be visible night and day; not only in the straits, but over the island on the open sea."

"So could I," said he, "if we were ashore,

and could get lots of wood. I could build a fire on top of that hill that would show for a long way round."

"But I mean from here."

"You can't do it, Billy. You'd have the ship afire."

"I don't mean to build a fire, sir. I'd build a kite, and send a light up on the string." Then I told him about the kite that Uncle Joe made for us boys. He slapped me on the back, and said: "By George, you're right! We'll have a kite."

We talked the matter over for a long time, and discussed the best way to build it, and what material to use. As the captain said, there was wind enough to fly a kedge-anchor. Still we decided to make it as light as we could without sacrificing strength, for it must be very strong. Paper would never do for a covering, there was so much rain. Finally, we got our plans all straightened out. There was a lot of bamboo in the carpenter's shop, and of this we made our frame, lashing it together with marline. We covered it with new flags, out of the signal locker, which we oiled with boiled oil, to make them impervious to the wind and rain.

It took us a day and a half to build, and it

was, as the captain said, "The grandfather of all the kites that were ever made." It was eight feet high and five wide. We unrove the main brace for a tail. We fastened it to the body of the kite with a bridle from each lower corner, and then let it hang in three parts, the middle one half as long again as the others. To the end of this middle part, we tied the small ensign, union down,—a signal of distress. To make the flag hang perpendicular, we sawed half the hand lead off, and tied it to the bottom corner. Weg ot up a new coil of ratlin and took the kinks out of it for a string.

I took the end of the ratlin stuff over the lower yards, and forward on the forecastle. Then came the job to get the big kite up there, and bend on the ratlin. It nearly took us overboard half a dozen times, but, by watching for lulls, we finally accomplished it. We laid it flat on the deck, with weights enough to hold it, after we got the line bent on. Then we flaked the tail down clear, and went aft. The captain took a severe turn around the quarter bitt, while I went up on the cross-jack yard, and waited for a puff.

The captain watched me anxiously, and I watched him. There was a stiff gale blowing, with once in awhile a puff that would

blow your mouth open if you happened to be looking to windward, and you would have to turn to leeward again before you could shut it.

"Now, Billy! Now!" he cried. Grasping the ratlin, I jumped off the yard toward the mizzen rigging.

"Let go! Let go!" yelled the old man. Not a bit too soon either. My weight raised the great kite, until the wind caught its under surface; and, as I dropped into the rigging it leaped aloft as though fired from a mortar. The old man said that the ratlin stuff stretched to twice its original length, as the kite sagged back on it, and shook its head, as though trying to tear the quarter bitt out of her. He could hardly hold it until I came down and helped him get another turn. Then he slacked away, and as she walked steadily aloft, almost over our heads, I was the proudest boy on the top of the world. The ensign showed beautifully, though, as the old man said, it could n't last there very long, it would snap itself to pieces. But the kite itself would show for miles around, in daylight.

We made the line well fast, and, while I trimmed lanterns, the captain went to work on another kite. Because, he said, we could

expect the one we had to last but a little while in such weather.

We covered our lanterns with different colored flags, not only for the purpose of making them more conspicuous, but also to prevent them blowing out. As soon as it got dark, we put what sailors call a lizard on the ratline, and hung half a dozen differently colored lanterns on to it. The captain had rigged a little squares'l to carry them up, and, bending the end of the log line to them for a downhaul, we let them go.

The miniature squares'l acted like a charm. I held the log reel above my head, and, zip ! the lanterns flew up the line ; the reel spinning round like wildfire. But we found it necessary to stop and connect the log line to the ratlin by several more lizards, as it had a tendency to sag away to leeward. The whole scheme was a flattering success ; several of the lanterns went out, but enough remained alight to make a strange and attractive signal.

In order to make it more conspicuous, the captain said we should haul it down every hour, and, after relighting such of the lamps as had gone out, send it up again ; and this we did. It made a pretty busy job for us, but then it was the most important thing we had

to do. We commenced to haul down exactly on the half-hour by the clock ; so that if anybody was watching they would notice that fact. The captain complimented me greatly on my ingenious discovery, and said that, if he ever got home, he should make a report of it to the hydrographic office, giving me all the credit. I told him it was not my discovery at all, but he said that the application of it to marine signalling was ; and that was the important part of it.

We had less bother with our kite than we expected. We had to watch that the line did n't chafe off on the bitt, or where it sometimes came in contact with the crossjack yard. The log line parted once, and our whole string of lanterns flew all the way up and stayed there ; but as there were lots of them in the cargo, we did n't mind that.

About a week after we first sent the kite up, I noticed a spot on it, and, taking the glass, I saw there was a hole in it. This was what we had been on the lookout for. So I called the captain, and taking the ratlin to the winch, we hove it down. We had an all-day job of it, getting the old kite down, and the new one set. When it was within a hundred feet or so of us, we heard a great rip and flapping, and

looking up saw that one whole side of the covering had blown away. This made it dive in huge circles, slatting its great tail about, with reports like cannon shots. Presently it fouled the main yard, and then caught over the foremost head. As we could no longer heave in line, and there was no way we could think of to capture the kite itself, which was now going round and round like a great wheel, I went aloft, and cut the line. Away it flew, like a big bird let loose ; it turned over and over, its tail finally catching in the water, and then with a great slap, it came down.

We did n't have as good luck raising the other ; the wind was stronger than it had been when we raised the first one, and as the tail was not quite heavy enough, it slatted around and knocked a hole in itself on the anchor stock. The captain was the most patient man I ever saw. He did n't get mad, but went to work and patched it up again. After working hard all day, we were at last rewarded by seeing it rise grandly in the air, where it floated as steady as a star. We sent up our lights, and, being both pretty well tired with our day's work, kept no watch that night.

The next morning Captain Griscom said :  
" Billy, I'm afraid the day is not very far off,



when we'll have to leave the old ship. She's slowly breaking up, and, if there should come a shift of wind, so as to blow right in here, she wouldn't last but a mighty short time. Of course we won't leave her until we have to. But, when that time comes, we may be obliged to go in a hurry. So I'm going to get the boat over, and we'll get provisions and water ashore, and build ourselves a shelter. We'll have to work days, and let her watch herself nights."

"All right, sir," said I, "but how about our lantern signals?"

"We'll set them at dark, and they'll have to take care of themselves. If anybody sees them, they'll know they are signals; and anyway that's all we can do."

We worked hard all day and got the boat over. We took her ahead of the ship, slung a kedge anchor to her stern, and I, getting into her, the captain slacked away on the line, until I was about three hundred feet ahead of the ship. Then I let go my kedge, and paying out on my rope, he hauled me back again. The dolphin striker was in its place yet, and when I got to it, I made the anchor rope fast in the boat's stern and came up. We hauled the other rope taut, and made it fast. Then

she was safely moored, head and stern, under the shelter of the ship's bow.

The first thing we did in the morning, was to go ashore and find a place to build our shelter. We came near wrecking the boat in making a landing, for the shore was nothing but a pile of broken and piled up rock, and the captain said that the very fact that the natives came from the other side of the point showed that this bay was not a desirable place to land. We got ashore at last, and of all the miserable, dismal places in this world that, I believe, was the worst. There was some snow, a few bushes, and all the rest was nothing but rock. I did hope I would never have to live there.

"Does n't look very inviting, does it, Billy?" said the captain, cheerily.

"No, sir," said I, "it certainly ain't the handsomest place I ever saw."

"Well, 'handsome is as handsome does.' There's one thing in its favor, it won't sink, nor wash away. We may not have to come ashore to live at all; I hope we won't. But there's nothing like having an anchor to windward."

We chose a place where three great rocks made a kind of shelter. They were not so far

from the landing but that we could roll a cask of water to them. We cleared up the ground as well as we could on the lee side, and returned aboard. For the next ten days we worked hard, getting a shelter rigged, of spars and sails, and filling it with provisions. We did n't allow the weather to interfere with us, for, as the captain said, you might wait forever for good, or even decent, weather in that country. By this time we were so worn out, and so full of sores from the constant wetting of the salt water that, having a good supply of stores ashore, the captain said we would take a day off, and rest. Oh, how good it was, on waking up that morning, to be able to roll over again, pull the blankets up to my chin and doze off. I was sleeping like a log, when I became hazily conscious of some one calling. Before I could wake enough to answer, the captain roared out, "Hello!" and rushed up the ladder. I was out after him in mighty short order.

## CHAPTER XXII

THE "BOREAS" OF NEW BEDFORD — A QUEER SHIP,  
AND AN ODD CREW — ADIEU TO TIERRA DEL  
FUEGO — I BECOME ENAMORED OF WHALING  
— A THOUSAND DOLLARS — GOOD-BYE, CAP-  
TAIN GRISCOM — BOUND FOR THE ARCTIC —  
"A BLOW!" — ICE BOUND.

ABOUT a ship's length astern of us lay a double-ended boat. Six oarsmen clad in oil-skins were holding her head to wind, while another, standing up in the stern, steered with a long oar.

Conversation was difficult, on account of the gale and the distance, they evidently not caring to trust themselves too near the wreck. The captain made them understand that we had a boat, and would come to them, if they would wait a bit. We went below, got the chronometer, ship's papers, and a few clothes, and, getting into our boat, were soon within easy hailing distance. They said they belonged to the bark *Boreas* of New Bedford, and were bound to the Arctic for a four years' cruise after

right whales. Their vessel lay just around the other side of the point under short sail. They said they had seen our signal several times during the last ten days, while they had been beating up to the Horn ; but this was the first time the weather had been fit to put a boat out. They took our line, and we all pulled together to get out of the bay. In half an hour we had got far enough to windward, to weather the point.

They shipped their oars, set a reefed mainsail, and we soon came in sight of their vessel, pitching about heavily under close reefed topsails, and fore topmast stays'l. We rounded to, under her lee quarter, while the queerest looking lot of scarecrows I ever saw lined her rail, and stared at us.

The whalers hauled our boat up to theirs, and we got in, and were all hoisted up together. Afterwards they took our boat in on deck. As the only vessel I had ever known was the *Chanticleer*, the *Boreas* was a revelation to me ; she looked so short and broad. Her spars seemed like toys, after being accustomed to the magnificent sticks of the big clipper. There was a brick building in the middle of the deck, called the try-works. Her three boats hung out from her side, on great wooden davits, and

take her altogether, she looked about as awkward, clumsy, and ungainly a burlesque of a ship, as her motley, queerly-dressed crew, were of sailors.

There were down-east Yankees among them who seemed green, even to me. There were western island Portuguese; short, squatty, yellow, hairy fellows, who looked as if they might have been descended—and not very far descended either—from the gorilla. There were Kanakas, tatooed like the cannibal chiefs we read of, and the cook was a negro.

Though they had only been about three months from home, they were dressed in the most wonderful rigs imaginable. It seems that they made nearly all their own clothes, or else made them over. One fellow had on a red flannel cap like a plug hat. It stood nearly a foot high, and was ornamented with a quart or so of trousers' buttons, sewed on all over it. Another had on what must have once been a minister's black coat, but he had cut the tails off, and used part of them to increase the height of the collar for Cape Horn wear; while the rest had been applied as "sheathing" or, preventer-patches on the elbows. The original buttons had been supplanted by fancy skewers of whalebone. I didn't see a single pair of

trousers that had escaped the sheathing process. The seats and knees were all covered with something ; old canvas, bagging, or the remnants of others.

Captain Griscom aft, and I forward, were subjected to severe cross-questionings. Everybody expressed admiration for our method of signalling, which, they admitted, had been a puzzle to them until now.

We stood off shore until twelve o'clock that night. We then wore ship, and the next morning, as the result of a long talk between Captain Griscom and the whaler, two boats were lowered ; one in charge of the mate of the whaler and the other of our captain. They went in and sounded carefully all over the bay. On their return they reported plenty of water and a safe anchorage within half a mile of the wreck.

The next morning, the weather being tolerably good for that place, we made three short tacks, and, before twelve o'clock, dropped anchor in the bay, close to the old *Chanticleer*.

The next two weeks were busy times on board the *Boreas*. She had hundreds of big casks of fresh water in her hold. This served as ballast. The water of course could be used by the crew, and the casks were built to hold

oil. All that could be spared of the water was run out into the hold, and afterwards pumped out. The cooper knocked the casks down, and made them into shooks, so they would occupy less room. That was what they wanted now, room. For, night and day, the most valuable of the *Chanticleer's* valuable cargo was being transhipped to the *Boreas*. She could not take a third of it, but she took all she could. Then a fortunate easterly slant of wind blowing through the straits, we picked up our anchor and skipped.

How glad I was when the last vestige of Tierra del Fuego disappeared below the horizon. I had been there more than a month, and was so sick of it. We had not seen blue sky once during our stay, nor a minute of weather that could be called anything but horrible. Now that we were in the Pacific, that great and beautiful ocean, the weather mended rapidly. It was only a few days until the sun was shining down brightly, out of a clear blue sky, and the old blubber-hunter swashed gently and slowly—oh so slowly—to the northward.

I soon forgot my past hardships in listening to the strange tales of the whalers; they interested me greatly. I found that, in spite of their queer appearance, they were a fine lot of



fellows, Kanakas, Portuguese, and all. I saw but little of Captain Griscom these days. He stayed below a great deal, and our close comradeship on the wreck seemed a long way off. Whenever he did see me, though, he always found occasion to speak. He asked me how I liked the whaler, whether they treated me well, and so forth.

It was known to all hands that we were bound to San Francisco, to deliver the cargo taken from the *Chanticleer* ; and that, by the agreement between the two captains, no whaling was to be done on the way. As the *Boreas* was built to carry oil and stand ice squeezes she was no great sailer. Consequently, we had a long but very pleasant passage up the Pacific. A whaler carries so many men that there is never half work enough to go round, so there is none of that everlasting growling and grumbling that you hear on board of merchant ships.

I became so enamored of whaling, as it was represented to me by the yarns of the sailors, that I determined to give up all thought of gold-digging, and go along in the *Boreas*, if Captain Pettigrew would have me.

I helped discharge the cargo in San Francisco, and, after it was out, Captain Griscom called me down into the cabin, and asked :

"Billy, what do you intend to do now?"

I told him that I had decided to ask Captain Pettigrew to take me with him. He thought a moment, and then said: "I don't know but that, under the circumstances, it's about the best thing you can do. There's money in whaling, and Captain Pettigrew is a successful whaler. I did hope to be able to do something for you, but the loss of my ship has put a new face on my affairs. Owners are not looking for captains who lose ships. I may not go to sea again; I can't tell; but at any rate, Billy, I'll never forget you, and even if I have to quit the sea now, I may be able to do you many a good turn. If ever you want a friend, write or call on me at 281 — St, New York. If I am not there, you can find out where I am. Now, to close up our business. How much do you think I owe you?"

"I don't know, sir," said I. "I don't know how much you charged me for the clothes that I had out of the *Chanticleer's* slop-chest. I guess there ain't much coming to me, though."

"Do you remember that when I asked for volunteers to stay by the ship, I promised to pay them liberally in case I was able to save anything from the wreck?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well ; you were the only one that stayed by me. Not only that, but this vessel's log shows that it was the signal invented by you that attracted her attention. Consequently, I am indebted to you for my rescue, and the consignees can thank you that part of their freight has been landed here. Count that !"

So saying, he lifted a small canvas bag from the floor and emptied upon the table a glittering pile of the octagonal fifty-dollar gold pieces known as "Californy slugs." There were twenty of them—a thousand dollars.

"That 's yours my boy," said he, " and if I didn't have to consider anybody but myself, I 'd double it."

A thousand dollars ! It took my breath away. It was some time before I could speak. When I regained my senses, I tried to thank him. "Don't do it," said he, "I 'm ashamed to offer you such a beggarly sum. You are not half paid for what you 've done ; but it 's the best I can do now. I 'm expecting to get orders from home to charter a vessel, and go back after the rest of the cargo and whatever else I can save from the wreck. If I did n't think you 'd be better off here, I 'd take you with me, but I guess you 'd better stick to the *Boreas*."

Captain Pettigrew came down just then, and

Captain Griscom asked him if he did n't want to ship me.

"Certainly," said he, "a bright young fellow like him is always welcome aboard a whale ship." He brought out the articles at once, and I signed for the remainder of the cruise, my lay, or share, to be one barrel of oil out of every one hundred and fifty taken ; bone at the same rate.

Three weeks after entering San Francisco harbor, I bade Captain Griscom good-bye. The *Boreas* picked up her anchor, and, swinging through the "Golden Gate," pointed her bowsprit for the frozen north.

I was literally voyaging from one end of the world to the other, from near the Antarctic, to the Arctic. Steadily the sturdy little ship ploughed her way toward the regions of eternal ice. It was but a short time after leaving port, that the weather began to change. The sky became overcast, and the wind had a chill to it that, after our long voyage through both the temperate, and the torrid zones, was far from agreeable.

The whalers now commenced a raid on the slop chest for heavy clothing. They also regaled me with tales of suffering in the "Arctic," that might have caused me to

stay in San Francisco, if I had heard them sooner.

Captain Pettigrew was an experienced Arctic whaler, and a humane man. He allowed his crew to draw whatever they chose from his well-stocked slop-chest, and he put in at Victoria, Vancouver Island, where he laid in a supply of lumber with which to house her in if she should get caught in the ice. He had lost one vessel. The ice nipped her, crushing her like an eggshell. So he had this one built extra strong, to enable him to go much farther north than usual, hoping to find there the whales which were becoming scarce on the regular grounds.

She was braced and strengthened with heavy timbers, and sheathed outside with oak plank ; this, again, being covered with sheet-iron, from the stem to abaft the fore rigging.

On leaving Vancouver, the masthead lookout commenced in earnest. We might expect now to raise whales at almost any moment. As for me, I expected that we should be among them right away. We sailed on, and on, for days and weeks. There were no more signs of whales than there were of sheep. I began to think we had come on a fool's errand. We were well north now, expecting to see ice every day.

It was bitterly cold, and I could easily believe that it would be anything but a luxury to be capsized by an angry whale, into that frosty water. I was not half as anxious to see whales as I had been farther south.

The old man was getting anxious, and a little crabbed. The outlook was not promising. At this rate, the four years' cruise would not result in paying for the original outfit. Just as all hands were beginning to wonder who was the Jonah, there burst one day in the forenoon watch, from both crows' nests simultaneously, in the rich, sonorous, nasal twang of the Yankee whaleman, a rousing chorus of : — "Ah-h-h-blow ! Ah blow ! Ah, blow ! blow ! blow ! blo-o-o-o-w ! Ah, blow—"

"Where away ? where away ? Shut up yer blasted noise an' tell me whar them whales be ? Can't ye ?" shouted the old man, as, hanging on to the weather spanker vang, he gazed alternately aloft and around the horizon.

"Broad off on the lee beam, sir. Clost in under the land," answered the second mate, from the main crow's nest.

"Wha 'd yer make 'em out ter be ?"

"A big school o' right whales ; headin' acrost the wind, an' breachin'."

There was no need to call the watch. When

the first note of that lusty song reached the deck, they tumbled out pell-mell, grabbing line tubs and clearing away davit tackle falls with a will. The captain told us to hold fast all, and tail on to the weather braces, "An' not go plumb crazy, just 'cause there's a few whales a blowin'."

We ran down until he could see them from the deck before he would allow a boat to be lowered. There was considerable ice floating about, so that it required a good deal of skill to sail the boats without getting them stove. I had been assigned to the third mate's boat, and my respect for that awkward, ignorant-appearing man, increased several hundred percent as I noticed how skilfully and fearlessly, he handled that fragile cedar boat, as, with gaff topsail and jib set, she skimmed like a frightened gull over the heaving seas, toward our unsuspecting prey. The whales were splashing about in the cold water like huge kittens, and, as we sailed right in among them, I rather thought I had made a mistake in not going to the gold-fields.

"Stan' up!" said Mr. Jennings. The Portuguese boat steerer obeyed, and almost before I knew it, he had buried a pair of harpoons to the hitches in the oak-tough blubber of a

veteran bull. Zip ! zip ! the line flew through the smoking bow-chock as he sounded. Would he ever stop going down ? Mr. Jennings, who was very small potatoes aboard the vessel, was supreme boss here. He gave up the steering oar to the boat steerer, and went forward to kill the whale.

“Snub ’im ! snub ’im ! What’s the matter with ye, Anton ? d’ ye want ter lose yer line ?” He yelled to the boat-steerer.

Anton dexterously threw a turn of the rapidly flying line over the loggerhead, and “snubbed ’im.” Then I began to experience some of the delights of Arctic whaling. We had to brace our feet against the thwart ahead, and haul wet line. Oh how my fingers ached, all the rest of me had been cold enough before.

Pretty soon—though not half soon enough for me—we got up to him ; he looked like a submerged house, with only the roof showing above water. Mr. Jennings began darting his lance down into the water alongside the boat, but from the way the whale “scringed” at every dart, I knew he was getting it where it would do him the most good. Presently he began to spout blood ; then what looked like great chunks of liver came up, and floated about the boat.



While this was going on, we suddenly heard a dull "boom!" to windward, and looked round just in time to see the bark disappear in a snow squall, like a breath from a mirror.

"Hello!" said Mr. Jennings, taking a hasty glance round to note the positions of the other two boats, "I guess we 're a goin' ter have a spell o' weather. Wal, this ol' feller 's about dead anyway, so we 'll hang on ter him whether er no."

He stowed his lance in the brackets as he spoke, for the squall was coming down on us at lightning speed, whitening, and at the same time hiding, the sea in its path. We swung to leeward of the dying whale, made the harpoon line fast, so as to utilize him for both an anchor and a breakwater, and all hands crawled under the sail. The wind howled, and the seas, breaking on the dead whale, threw their spray, like broadsides of shot, clear over us. It rattled on the frozen sail like hail on the roof of a barn.

Every little while Mr. Jennings would raise the corners of the sail and look out ; then close it with the remark, that he could n't "see nothin'." This kept us from getting overheated.

After a long spell of silence, I heard the third mate grumbling to himself: "Wal, durn a

fool, anyhaow. Blast me, it sarves me glad fer comin' up here ter this infernal Ar'tic, when I might a' gone saouth sea jest as well as not." Here he straightened out his legs with a jerk, saying to his cold feet : "Freeze, blast ye ! if ye want ter, I guess I kin stan' it as long 's yew kin, I guess—Hullo, what 's that ?" Up went the corner of the sail again. He looked out for a minute, and then—throwing the sail back altogether, he shouted : "Git aout here, fellers ; we're alls'raounded by ice. Hurry up, naow, n' git the boat hauled up, fore she's stove."

Stiffly and miserably we crawled from our uncomfortable quarters, on to the floe. After thrashing our hands, and stamping our feet, in a vain attempt to induce a partial circulation, we got the boat upon the ice. As it was closing over the whale, we cut loose, and let him go. For the sake of exercise we remained on the ice, preferring it to the cramped quarters in the boat. Although the wind was still blowing furiously, it was not snowing very hard, and within an hour we made out the bark's lights, half a mile or so to windward. It was a welcomesight ; for to be separated from your ship in an Arctic snowstorm is the poorest joke I know of.

Without even saying, "by your leave," to our superior officer, we let a joyful yell out of us, and sprinted over the uneven surface of the ice towards those lights. Arriving alongside, we were helped aboard, and, to emphasize our welcome, ordered aloft to furl the sails, which the old man, with his gang of ship-keepers, had clewed up—the bark being now fast in the ice. This job done, we thankfully toasted our chilled bones around the forecastle "bogie."

## CHAPTER XXIII

A NASTY SQUALL — TWO BOATS STOVE — A MAN  
LOST — ICEBOUND — A GREAT HUBBUB — A  
SUDDEN DROP — WHALES GALORE — AMBER-  
GRIS — A BIG CONTRACT — DEATH OF CAPTAIN  
PETTIGREW — I AM ELECTED NAVIGATOR.

BEFORE morning the other boats' crews arrived ; but they had been less fortunate than we. Besides losing their whales, both their boats were badly stove ; and the mate's boat-steerer, a Kanaka, was lost through a crack in the ice. How the old man raved. He swore at his two senior officers, and called them everything but gentlemen, or good whalemén. He told them they ought to be hoeing corn instead of up here losing his boats. " Why," said he, " there 's that young Jennin's, that I allus thought was more'n harf a fool, I'm dummed if 'e hain't beat ye both. He saved 'is boat."

Hearing this, Jennings seemed to grow about a foot, but was soon reduced to his normal stature again by the next remark of the old man, which was to the effect that it was

“astonishin’ how dumb luck would frequently carry a fool through.”

The cold gray daylight showed that we were at the entrance of a long, narrow bay which was chockful of ice. To windward, it was packed solid for a couple of miles, and beyond that the water was thick with floating ice, which was being constantly added to the pack. Slowly but surely, groaning and creaking in unavailing protest, the *Boreas* was forced along into the bay. The continual grinding and crashing was deafening. Occasionally there would be a great tearing and ripping, and a huge floe would be forced up edgewise from underneath, making its appearance suddenly like a great white ghost. It would be shoved up, forty or fifty feet, where it would sway about for a moment, and then become a fixed and solid feature of the desolate scene.

Over this treacherous and ever-changing surface we had to go out and bring in our boats. Owing to the many difficulties which we encountered, the whole of the short day was consumed in getting them aboard.

As it was evident that we were fast for the winter, we proceeded to strip her to her lower masts, sending even the lower yards down. We rigged in the jibboom, and housed her fore

and aft. The gale blew continuously for three weeks. Like an immense hydraulic ram it forced the ice, and the bark with it, into the bay. The capacity of the bay being limited, the ice was piled high by the action of that which was being continually shoved in. The *Boreas*, being fortunately on top of the pile, escaped the vise-like grip of the grinding mass, and received no injury. A couple of months of this incessant ramming left her halfway up the bay, and forty feet above sea-level.

The carpenter now had ample time to repair the boats, and the crew were kept budging ; for plentiful exercise is the best of scurvy preventors. We took little excursions on the ice, whenever the weather permitted, and were chased aboard one day by a white bear. We armed ourselves with lances and blubber-spades, and went after him again ; but he had more sense than we gave him credit for, and escaped. We noticed that the ice was thinning all round, where it came in contact with the vessel, although the weather was intensely cold. As none of the old timers had ever seen anything like that before, it caused a great deal of comment. When, one morning, steam was seen to be issuing from the slight crevice that had formed all round her, we were still more sur-

prised. The position which she had taken in her icy cradle gave her a heavy starboard list. And, having remained for some time in this position, everything on board had been adjusted to that angle.

We had blocked our beds up level ; a table which the carpenter had put up in the fore-castle, had been set level, with a long-legged bench on the port side, and a short-legged one on the starboard. The cabin table and the cook's caboose, and in fact everything aboard, had been accommodated to the list. Having remained stationary so long, we had become careless about securing things, so that all manner of articles lay about loosely, as they do ashore. Consequently, when she suddenly righted herself one morning just at daylight, a great hub-bub ensued.

The starboard watch were thrown from their bunks on to the table, which, not having been built to stand such a broadside, promptly collapsed. Being loaded with all the fore-castle tinware, the whole business, sailors, table, and dishes, were shot on top of the port watch in a howling, swearing, rattling pile. Before we could extricate ourselves, there came a loud grinding, a crashing and snapping, as of rending timbers, a sense of falling, and then she

brought up with a bone-shaking thud and splash, and rolled easily from side to side. Every man jack, from old Captain Pettigrew, to the greenest Western Island Portuguese in the forecastle, was sprawling somewhere, and tangled with something. I was jammed under a bunk by a lot of sea-chests, and had quite a time getting out.

As fast as we could, we made our way to the deck. The first thing I noticed, as I poked my nose through the companionway, was the hole overhead—like a great skylight—through which she had fallen, into a hollow under the ice, that was chockful of right whales. They were badly gallied by our sudden descent among them, and spouted, and splashed about wildly for a time ; but being close prisoners like ourselves, they soon quieted down.

The *Boreas* did not appear to have suffered much by her sudden drop. The pump well was dry, which was a great comfort. The davits, catheads, and bumpkins had all been torn away. The third mate's boat, which escaped before, was now a mass of kindlings : while the other two, which stood in chocks on deck, where the carpenter had been working on them, were all right. The bobstay lanyards had parted, allowing the bowsprit to "top up," and fall in-



board, where it now stood leaning against the foremast. She had no channels, so her lower rigging was all right. Everything of a fragile nature was broken. The mercurial barometer was torn from its gimbals and lay, a shattered wreck, on the cabin floor ; but the chronometer—a celebrated London make—was unhurt.

This was evidently the same school of whales among which we had been at work when the gale struck us, and they, like ourselves, had been forced into the bay. The ice grounding on a bar to seaward of them, had cut off their retreat. But, as the britt on which they fed had been driven in with them, they had not fared badly. It was their continual blowing that had thawed us out, and furnished the steam which we had seen. By the light that came through the hole overhead we could see that the whales were as thick as hops right alongside ; and off in the darkness we could hear them blowing in all directions. When the excitement died down a bit, the old man made us a speech.

“Naow, boys,” said he, “here’s your v’y’ge right here. Here’s ile enough ter fill us up, and mebbe more. These whales has been here all winter, ’n’ can’t git out. It’s a big job ter load this vessel with ile ; so we’ll git right

at it, watch 'n' watch, 'n' work like beavers ter git it, afore the ice breaks up 'n' it gits away."

We greeted the speech with a hearty cheer, and while the mate went down with his boat to kill, the rest of us moored her; for, as her lowermasts did not clear the edge of the hole, it was necessary to hold her rigidly in position. We then got up the cutting-in gear, and for three months our try-works fires were never out.

During the day the hole admitted plenty of light. The roof was composed of clear green ice, beautifully arranged in great irregular crystals, that caught the light, and, when the sun shone directly down, sent it flashing to the farthest corner. The great black backs of the whales were continually rolling up and disappearing in the strange, soft light, while the steam from their blowing, and the constant churning of the water, made the whole thing look like an immense pot, with the cover on, and gently boiling.

To furnish light for the night work, the carpenter made a lot of baskets of hoop iron. These we hung about the ship, and fastened to the carcasses of the dead whales, and kept them full of blazing scraps; so that, except for the dense black smoke which they gave off,

the place was as light by night as it was by day, and the scene was much more weird and beautiful. During the period of trying out, the greatest discomfort prevailed fore and aft ; we were continually soaked with oil, salt water, and blood. Boils broke out on us. The many unavoidable cuts which we received from the keen blubber tools became inflamed and painful. Oil pervaded everything ; our food tasted of it, and the men said that even their tobacco partook of the universal flavor.

The cockroaches, revelling in the abundance, grew to such dimensions, and bred so rapidly, that they took full charge of the ship ; and it was only when thoroughly exhausted that we were able to sleep. However, we were compressing the work and wages of four long years into one ; and that was a great consolation. The knowledge that we were getting rich cheered us, and helped to make the filthy work endurable. We would lie in our bunks, and, between slaps at the cockroaches, " figger up " our greasy gains, and gloat in anticipation over the grand splurge we would have when we got home.

We found three sickly old bulls, chockful of ambergris. As the capture of one ambergris

whale is considered equal to a full cargo of oil, you can understand our good fortune. We filled her to the hatches with oil, and then all hands killed whales. We sent the fore topmast aloft, and, using it as a derrick, hoisted the blubber to the surface of the ice. Then we dragged it ashore, and stacked it up; trusting to providence to keep the Esquimaux and white bears away from it. We never stopped until the last of the big school of spouters had surrendered his life to the good cause. The odors from the carcasses were most delectable.

The spring being now well advanced, the weather was mild and pleasant. The ice thawed rapidly by day, but froze again at night. And, from the high land, we could see the open blue water, sparkling temptingly to the westward. To get the bark out of her hole was the next job, and it was a corker. But while we had been slopping about in the grease and dirt the old man had thought it all out. As there was room for the hull to pass under the roof, it was only necessary to cut a path for the spars most of the way.

First, we chopped the hole big enough so that, by hauling her astern, it extended clear of the bows. Then we rigged the topsail yard

out from the mast like a crane. A three inch rope was rove through a block at the outer yard arm, brought down on deck and through lead blocks to the windlass. Two kedges were frapped to a spare anchor, and hove up to the yard arm, twenty feet above the ice. Men went up with sharp blubber spades, and nicked out the course. When they had a ten-foot square channelled out, one or two cracks with the improvised pile driver would break it off, and send it roaring down with a great splash that would make the old bark bob her nose, heavily as she was loaded. Just one week from the day the first blow was struck we dropped our mud hook in clear water, and all hands turned to to get the spars aloft, bend sails, and get away from there. From San Francisco Captain Pettigrew sent a schooner for the rest of our blubber. We heard that a returning whaler had reported a new Arctic volcano, the latitude and longitude of which corresponded with the locality of our try works, when, for three months they were sending a continuous column of black smoke up through that hole in the ice.

We lay in San Francisco a week, and every day one watch would be ashore for twenty-four hours. I now had a chance to see some of the

specimens of the gold miners that Captain Griscom had told me of, and I found that his description of them fitted first-rate. They were a tough-looking lot. I got pretty well acquainted with one old fellow, and his stories of the miners, and the hardships and uncertainties of the business, cured me of what little remnant of gold-fever I had left. I tried to learn what had become of my old captain; but in those days, a man was forgotten in California as soon as his back was turned; so I was unable to hear of him.

Once more the *Boreas* was wading through the blue waters of the Pacific. This time the crow's nests were deserted. The boats were stowed in on deck, and her nose was pointed for the South Pole—homeward bound.

Now, when we did n't need them, and could n't use them, we saw whales nearly every week. As if they knew they were safe from us, they would roll lazily alongside for hours together, to the intense disgust of Captain Pettigrew, and all the other old whalers.

Nothing of importance happened until after we got round the Horn, and were running up the South American coast. One night the hook on the spanker vang block broke, and the block, falling on Captain Pettigrew's head,

killed him instantly. It was a great shock to us all. He was a good man, and had won the sincere respect of his crew. It seemed hard that now, after making the most prosperous voyage of his life, he should be killed when so near home. We buried him the next day ; and after the funeral, the mate, Mr. Wiggins, called us all up, and said :

“Men, I’ve called ye aft here ter tell ye that we’ve got ter make a port, ’n’ git a navigator ter take this vessel home. We’re all on us more whalers ’n’ we be navigators. I c’n git the latitude all right, ef I only have somebody ter c’rect the declination fer me ; but that hain’t enough ; ye ’ve got ter git longitude, ’n’ ther’ hain’t none of us knows anything ’bout that.”

“I know how to get the longitude, sir,” said I.

“Ye dew ?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Where ’d you larn ? I thought ye was a boy aboard o’ that ship.”

“So I was, sir, but Captain Griscom taught me navigation, and I did her day’s works for a long time.”

“Kin ye—kin ye work aout a course ’n’ distance ?”

“ Why, certainly.”

“ Come daown here in the cabin a minute. That 'll do men; go foward !”

We went below, and he brought out the track chart ; her position at noon of the previous day was pricked on it. I called for the dividers and parallel rule. I showed him what our course should be, explaining the variation of the compass. He said that was all right out here, where we had plenty of room ; but what he wanted to know was, how I could prove to him and the crew that my longitude was reliable. I made a rapid calculation, and told him that, if the wind held, I would sight Cape Frio in forty-eight hours. As I would have to make a Northwest course to do that, he admitted that it was a fair test ; but he warned me, that, if I beached her, he'd blow my brains out if he hung for it.

“ Then,” said I, “ I'll have nothing to do with it.”

“ Oh, yes, ye will tew. I'm captain now, en' you 'll obey my orders, or I'll know the reason why.”

“ But I did n't ship for navigator, and as I don't get paid for it, you have no right to make me do it. Besides, the best and smartest of men lose their ships. I don't know whether



your chronometer is right or not, and if it ain't, that itself would put her ashore."

"Oh, the chronometer's all right. Captain Pettigrew never had no trouble with it."

"Well, all right. The weather is clear, and the moon nearly full; if you will keep a good lookout, I'll do as I said, sight Cape Frio in forty-eight hours. If I can do that, I can make any other land fall, can't I?"

"Yes, if you c'n do that, I'm satisfied to let ye take 'er home."

"All right, sir," said I, "and I hope that when we get home you won't forget to mention the fact to the owners."

"If you take this vessel safe home, I'll agree ter trade my v'y'ge with ye for the reward ye'll git from the owners. That's satisfactory, I guess, ain't it?"

"Yes, indeed," said I, "that's all right."

I was highly elated, for I knew I could do it without any trouble. Still, I was just as well pleased myself with the idea of getting a sight of land, so that I could see for myself how near right the chronometer was. The wind held steady, but I warned Mr. Wiggins that I thought there was a slight current with us, which would cause the land to appear somewhat sooner than I had expected.

Sure enough, in forty-six hours from the time I had said we raised Cape Frio. The mate said he was satisfied, and, on putting it to vote, all hands agreed that I should take her home. Having found, by comparing my longitude by observation with that of the Cape, that the chronometer was all right, I felt perfectly easy in my mind ; and, in fact, I had no trouble whatever. Mr. Wiggins sailed her, and I navigated her. At first he used to look over my work with a great show of care, but at last, as he knew nothing about it anyway, he quit bothering me.

## CHAPTER XXIV

HOME AGAIN — CONGRATULATIONS — THE DEAR  
OLD MOTHER — MR. BAKER'S TROUBLES — A  
NEW FIRM — CONCLUSION.

WHEN within two days' sail of New Bedford, we ran into a whole lot of cotton bales, floating on the water. As far as we could see, east and west, they were scattered along. We learned afterwards that a steamer had collided with a big ship bound from New Orleans to Liverpool, cotton loaded.

As there seemed to be a possibility of saving the ship, the steamer took her in tow. The ship's crew threw cotton overboard to get at the leak and stop it. As we were so near port, we put our boats out and fished for cotton bales for two days. We piled all we could on deck, and took a string of them in tow.

The cruise of the *Boreas* stands to this day as the most successful voyage ever made by a New Bedford vessel. More than a full cargo of oil, three ambergris whales, and nearly a thousand bales of cotton.

The owners dealt with me most generously for the service I had rendered in navigating their vessel home, so that, with my share of the proceeds of the voyage, and the thousand dollars Captain Griscom gave me in San Francisco, I was a pretty rich boy, I tell you.

I bade my shipmates good-bye, and, after depositing all but a couple of hundred dollars in the bank, I took the first train for Boston on my way to Oakville. I stayed in Boston over night, and in the morning fitted myself out with the best suit of clothes I ever had in my life, everything brand new "from top to toe."

At four o'clock that afternoon I alighted from the train at the nearest station to Oakville. A walk of two miles brought me to the village. I saw a cloud of dust approaching, and a young fellow came tearing by me on a shaggy colt. He was riding bareback, with a rope halter for a bridle, and drumming on the colt's ribs with his bare heels. It was Frank Gibbs, breaking one of his father's colts.

"Hey, Frank!" I shouted, as he flew by.

He saw me, turned, and drove through a brush fence at the side of the road. Then he jumped off and came tearing back. He grabbed me by both hands and : "Gosh't I'mighty! Will Kimball, where 'd you come from? Where ye

bin? My, but ain't ye fine! Be'n ter Californy? D'ye git rich? Course ye have. Wal, I swanny if you hain't got a watch 'n' chain. Come on over ter supper 'n' see the ol' folks."

I couldn't get a word in edgeways. Mrs. Gibbs was as glad to see me as if I had been her own son. When Mr. Gibbs came in from the field, he slapped me on the back and said: "Bully for you, Billy! I allus knew you was made of the right kind of stuff, an' would come out ahead o' some o' them smarties that was allus a tryin' ter down ye. Tell us all about it." We sat up till after midnight, exchanging news. I wished to go home. They would not hear of it. I must stay over night. Finding it next to impossible to get away, I at last agreed, and passed a pleasant evening with these true friends.

"Do ye know what 's become o' Walter Baker?" asked Mr. Gibbs.

"No, sir. How could I?"

"He's in jail for forgery. Forged a check on the bank. His father tried to save 'im, but 't was n't no use. 'T was him stole that money 't his father had you took up for. Deacon Wakeman's dead. I s'pose you know?"

"The Deacon dead? Oh, that's too bad! I wanted to see him."

"Yes, he's dead. Died o' numony las' winter—widder feels turrible—hain't got over it yit."

Early the next morning I bade my kind friends good-bye, and hurried over to the old home to see the dear old mother. Poor old lady, she had failed greatly during the two years that I had been away. She was delighted to see me, however, and assured me again and again that she had never believed me guilty of theft—as if I did n't know that.

Naturally, my return created quite a ripple of excitement in our small village. People who had never noticed me before now stopped me in the road and asked about my travels. I treated them all respectfully, but gave them mighty little personal information. We had callers to spend the evening who had not been inside the Deacon's door before in years.

It was a great pleasure to meet those who had always used me right—the members of our ball-club; the good-natured blacksmith; and others. They all praised my appearance, and said they had always known I would come out at the top of the heap.

I took my place as head of the family, but instead of putting on my old clothes and going to work, I hired a couple of men—to the great

astonishment of the natives, who thought I was putting on a great many unnecessary airs, and predicted that my fall would be sudden and effective.

I noticed that Ma Wakeman had something on her mind. Having waited a couple of months in vain for her to confide in me, I asked her plump and plain what the trouble was. She hesitated, evidently not liking to tell; but at last, with a flood of tears, the dear old soul told me of her great sorrow. She had been born, and passed her whole life, in the house where we now lived. Times had been hard, and crops poor for several years, and "Pa" had been obliged to mortgage the place. In spite of all they could do, they had barely been able to keep the interest paid, up to the time when he was taken sick. Since then she had not only been unable to pay a cent, but had run in debt for his doctor's and funeral expenses. Just before my return she had been notified by the mortgagor, that the whole amount, principal and interest, must be paid at the expiration of the next quarter, or, he would have to foreclose. "And oh, Willie," said she, "I had n't the heart to speak of it, an' I don't suppose it matters much, anyway, 'cause we'll have to go to the poor-house; but

here you 've be'n hirin' men to work on the place, an' runnin' it more an' more in debt."

I was sorry that I had caused her a moment's anxiety by not telling her of my circumstances. I told her at once that I had more than money enough to pay off the mortgage and keep her in comfort for the remainder of her days. Her gratitude, and renewed happiness, paid me a thousandfold for all that I had gone through during those two years.

It seemed that Mr. Baker was the gentleman who held the mortgage. I had not seen him since my return, but I had learned from the village gossips that his affairs were not in a very flourishing condition. An opposition factory had been started in a near-by town, with steam power and modern machinery. While some of his lifelong customers stood by him nobly, most of them patronized the new concern, which was able to turn out furniture so much more cheaply than he could. I could not blame him for calling in his money; he needed it.

The next day I called on the old gentleman. He had aged greatly since I saw him last. Business troubles, and the misdeeds of Walter—the apple of his eye—had turned his hair as white as snow, and added to the stoop of his shoulders.



"Good-morning, Mr. Baker!" said I, when I was admitted to his office. He looked at me keenly, and, without offering his hand, or asking me to be seated, said, rather ungraciously:

"Ah, good-mornin'. You're that Kimball boy?"

"Yes, sir. I've come over to see you about Deacon Wakeman's mortgage."

"What have you got to do with it?"

"Mrs. Wakeman has given me charge of it, to do as I see fit."

"As you see fit, hey? I guess you 'll find, young man, it 'll be as *I* see fit. I'm goin' ter foreclose on the place as soon 's it's due, an' you can tell Mis' Wakeman so."

He turned his back to me, and went to writing again. That stirred my wrath, and I said: "You can foreclose as soon as you please; but you 'll never get the place. I've got money enough to pay your claim half a dozen times over." I never saw him make such a quick movement as he did when I said that. He whirled round, shoved his glasses back on the top of his head, and fairly beamed on me.

"Is that true?" he asked. "Are you telling the honest truth?"

"Certainly I am. Why should I lie to you? You could soon find out for yourself."

"Look here, Will,—your name is Will, I believe!"

"Yes, sir."

"If you can prove that you have the money you say you have, I've got a proposition to make you—a business proposition, that you can't afford to miss."

"It's easy enough proved. All you need do, is write to B—— and W——, bankers in New Bedford, and ask how much I have on deposit with them. I'll write, too, and tell them to let you know."

"Good! good! You're just the man I'm looking for." He jumped up and, grabbing me by both hands, shook them heartily, slapped me on the back, and behaved in such an altogether extravagant manner that I thought he had gone crazy.

"Come in again, Mr. Kimball, day after tomorrow, will you? By that time, I shall be ready to talk business with you, I think."

"Yes, sir, I'll come in, but, as I have no knowledge of business methods, I won't agree to do anything until I have consulted some competent friend."

"Why certainly, that's what I want you to do. Bring a lawyer with you to guard your interest. This matter can't be attended to too

soon to suit me." After some more talk of this kind he bade me a rather effusive good-day.

I talked with Mr. Gibbs, and my hard-headed friend, the blacksmith, about this strange interview, and asked their opinions. They both advised me to go mighty slow. "Old Baker's a shrewd business man," said they, "an' can put your money to good use if he's a mind to; but you look out for him. He's too sharp for a boy like you to deal with."

By their advice, I retained a young lawyer who had recently settled in the village, and was free of any connection with Mr. Baker. I told him the whole story, and on my next visit he went with me.

Mr. Baker, after remarking that the only way to do business was to state the case with absolute clearness, made the following statement: "You know, Mr. Kimball, that there is a stream of water on the Wakeman place, called 'Stony Brook.' It passes through a notch between two hills, about half a mile to the eastward of the house.

"In the next quarter of a mile, it has a fall of over a hundred feet. A dam could be built in the notch, at small expense, which would back the water up into the narrow but deep gully behind.

“During the spring and fall rains, an immense quantity of water could accumulate there, without overrunning much land. I’ve been trying for the last twenty-five years to buy that water privilege from the Deacon; but he was too sharp for me. I saw the day was coming when furniture would be made by machinery, and I would need it. That day has now arrived. I have a formidable competitor in the next town. But they use steam power. With the cheaper power that this falling water would give me, I could run them out of business, and once more resume my place as the principal furniture manufacturer in Western Massachusetts.

“When the Deacon wanted money, I was only too glad to let him have it, and I believed, when he died, that I should get control of the power. But your appearance, with money to pay off the mortgage, blocks that scheme. Therefore I propose that we go into partnership. You can, no doubt, obtain the water privilege from the widow, for which I will cancel the mortgage. You furnish two thirds of the capital to make the improvements, and I will furnish the other third. I will put in my experience and goodwill, and give you a half interest in the business.”

I was not only delighted, I was staggered, at what seemed a very generous offer, and would have accepted at once. My lawyer, however, declined to let me talk. He asked a few questions which brought out pretty plainly the fact that, if Mr. Baker didn't get the water privilege, he would be a ruined man inside of a year. We then left, promising to give him our answer at an early day.

When we got outside, the lawyer slapped me on the shoulder, and said: "My boy, you've got that old hunk just where he's had everybody else for the last thirty years."

"What do you mean by that?" I asked.

"I mean that you can make your own terms with him. He's got to accept whatever you offer. And I predict that inside of five years you'll have the business all to yourself, and he'll be where he ought to, where he intended to put the Widow Wakeman,—in the poor-house."

"Well, then, you're altogether wrong. I'll never do anything of the kind. I think it was a very generous offer, and even if it is a case of 'have to,' with him, I won't take advantage of him. What good would it do me to ruin him? I should always hate myself. A half interest in his business will make me a

rich man, and I shall have the pleasure of knowing that I have, while benefiting myself, at the same time saved my former employer from ruin in his old age."

The lawyer was intensely disgusted with my argument. "If that's the way you try to do business," said he, "he'll have *you* in the poor-house, you see if he don't."

When I told Mrs. Wakeman she put her arms round my neck, and kissed me as she used to when I was a little barefoot boy. She said I had done right, and she was proud of me. Her approval more than counterbalanced the lawyer's opinion.

Unexpected engineering difficulties arose in the building of the dam. This delayed the work so that nearly two years elapsed before we were able to let the water into the penstock of our handsome new brick mill. The opposition struggled along for six months, and then sold us the pick of their improved machinery at our own price. That was ten years ago. To-day the first thing that attracts the attention of the visitor to Oakville, is the legend "Baker & Kimball," in gold letters across the front of the largest and best equipped furniture factory in the State.

Mr. Baker was gathered to his fathers five

years ago. His expressions of gratitude to me, when on his death-bed, repaid me a thousand-fold, for my refusal to revenge myself on him when I had the opportunity. Walter, chastened and reformed by his punishment, represents his mother's interest in the firm. He bids fair to become a highly respected business man. Frank Gibbs learned the trade with us. I advanced him as rapidly as he was able to go, and he is now our General Superintendent. Six of our old ball club, all who cared to, are employed in the factory. I see Captain Griscom when I go to Boston annually to renew my contracts. The loss of the *Chanticleer* proved anything but disastrous to him. He chartered a vessel in San Francisco, and saved nearly all her cargo, besides much valuable wreckage. The underwriters were so well pleased that they appointed him chief of their bureau of inspection in Boston,—a snug and fat berth which the hearty old sea-dog appreciates to its utmost.

Dear old Mother Wakeman—very old now, and slightly garrulous—never tires of singing the praises of her Willie, and how he saved her from the poorhouse. “Bless her!”

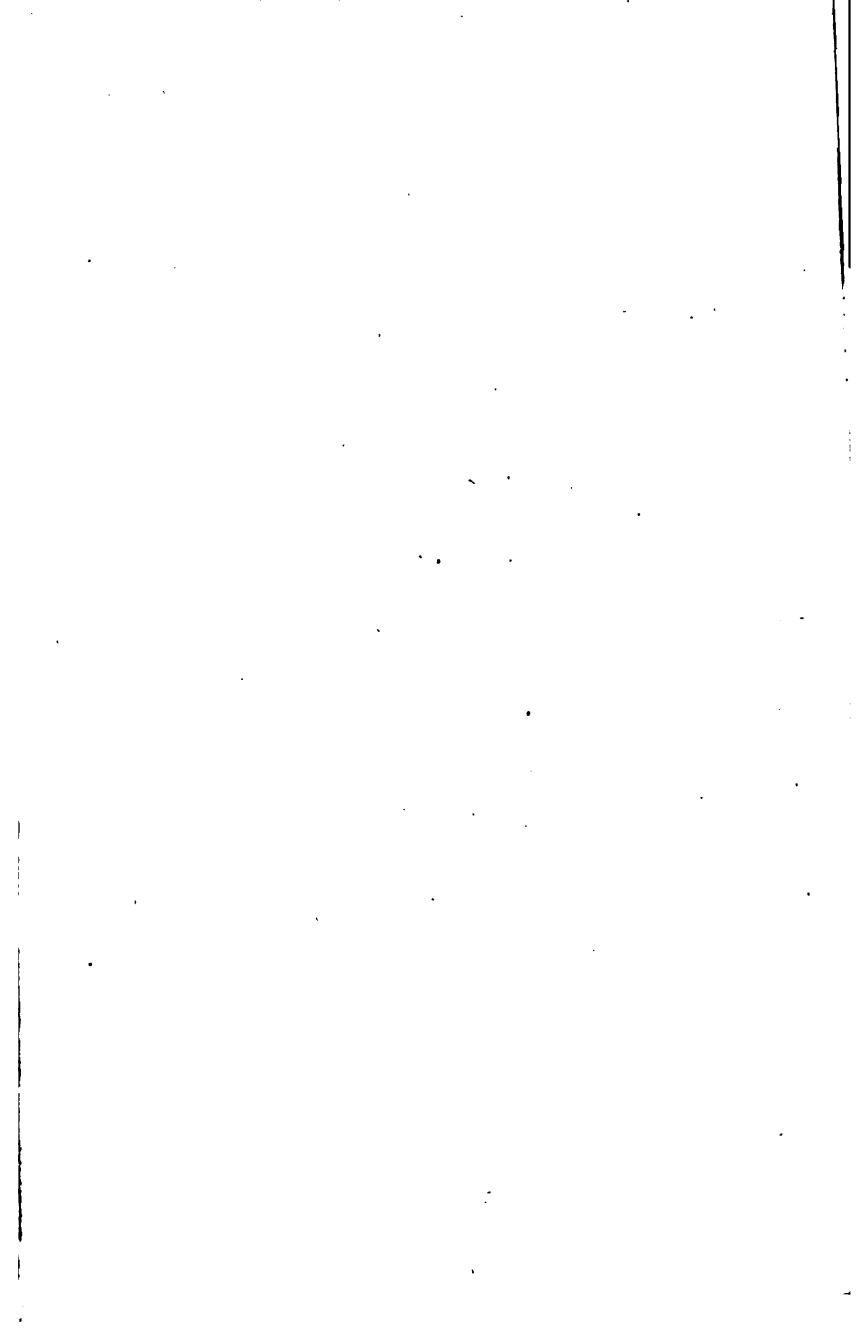
THE END.











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